

MILITARY ILLUSTRATED

□ PAST & PRESENT

No.22

December 1989/January 1990

The Legion at
Camerone, 1863

1914-18 Trenches

Civil War
Trained
Bands

Napoleonic
Redcoats:
New Lace
Details

Interview:
War
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Our cover illustration shows a reconstruction of a French Foreign Legion corporal in Mexico, 1863 — see article on p.10.

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EDITORIAL

Among our first-time contributors to this issue is Keith Roberts; born in 1955, and a history graduate of the University of Leicester, Keith works for one of the major clearing banks; he is also a specialist on 16th and 17th century military subjects. He is the author of a number of articles on military practice, particularly that of the English Civil War, and recently published a book on infantry of that war in the Osprey Elite series. His primary research in the field is notable for drawing directly upon original drill books and manuals.

Stolen helmet

We are asked to draw the attention of any dealers or collectors to the theft,



Keith Roberts

in about mid-August, from the Weymouth Borough Museum, of a very rare Tarleton helmet of the Sherborne Loyal Volunteers c.1798. If this item comes to your notice please contact Maj. John Carroll, Curator, Dorset Military Museum, The Keep, Dorchester, Dorset DT1 1RN, tele-

phone 0305-64066. The black helmet has a black peak, red turban, black fur crest front to rear, red side plume, and oval front plate 'Sherborne Loyal Volunteers', and is marked inside 'D. Penny'.

Errata

In 'MI' No. 20, pp.24-25, the transparencies were reversed during printing, i.e. the buttons appear on the wrong side.

45th Regiment Print

We are happy to agree to a request to publicise a limited edition of 500 prints of a painting by Richard Scollins showing Lt. James MacPherson of the 45th (Nottinghamshire) Regt. raising his jacket on the flagstaff of the castle of Badajoz on 6 April 1812: a feat commemorated to this day by the Regiment (now the Worcestershire & Sherwood Foresters Regt.) on the anniversary. The prints, mea-

suring 12in. x 17in., cost £15, plus P&P (UK, 80p.; N. America, £1.50; Australia, £1.90); and the proceeds are to be used by the Regimental Association to improve facilities at the Regiment's war memorial. Cheques should be made out to The Sherwood Foresters Memorial Appeal, and sent to: C. Housley, 83 Draycott Rd., Sawley, Long Eaton, Notts. NG10 3BL.

'MI' price and delivery

After nearly two years at £2.25 we are obliged by rising production costs to increase the jacket price of 'MI' to £2.50 from this issue.

Subscription rates are unaffected; and as we are informed that some readers are having difficulty in securing regular copies through the retail trade, we again urge you to consider the advantages of taking out a direct subscription — see coupon on page 9.

Video Releases to Rent:

'Hanna's War' (Pathe Video: 15)

'The Beast of War'

(RCA/Columbia: 18)

'Shock Troop'

(RCA/Columbia: 18)

ON THE SCREEN



sequences, and as a comment on the war. Daskal, conditioned to the horrors of war since the age of eight, represents a Russia that suffered so much at the hands of the Nazis, and yet is acting in the same brutal manner. By contrast, the sensitive Doverchenko represents a view which recognises the war as wasteful and inhuman. The film is based on the stage play *Nanawatai* by William Mastrosimone, but has been most successfully adapted for the screen. The Israeli locations stand in well for Afghanistan, giving this David and Goliath story a most authentic look.

J. Christian Ingvordsen's *Shock Troop* cannot be given the same recommendation. John Christian plays Frank White, an American 'Shock Troop' officer who is sent to Moscow to destroy a top secret weapons guidance system that has been captured by the Russians. The action sequences are shot mainly at night, presumably in an attempt to hide the poor production values, and the story as a whole is no more believable than *Rambo*.

An Israeli-converted Ti-67 playing the rôle of a Soviet T-62 in 'The Beast of War'.

(RCA/Columbia)

Video Releases to Buy:

'Classic War Movies'

(Warner Home Video)

'Americans at War' (Stylus Video)

'German Combat Newsreels'

(Tomahawk)

'That War in Korea'

(GMH Entertainment)

Warner Home Video have added to their collection of classic war movies. *Paths of Glory* (1957) is Stanley Kubrick's powerful French court-martial drama of World War One starring Kirk Douglas; John Frankenheimer's *The Train* (1965) stars Burt Lancaster as a French resistance leader attempting to prevent the Nazis stealing priceless art treasures; while Howard Hawks' *Air Force* (1943) concerns a B-17 bomber crew in the Pacific soon after Pearl Harbour. The last two are classic

Menahem Golan's *Hanna's War* (1988) is based on the true story of Hanna Senesh, who was trained with fellow Jews to set up escape routes for Allied airmen shot down in her native Hungary. The film shows how she was parachuted into Yugoslavia, but was arrested when her companion panicked at a Hungarian railway station. The remainder of the film deals with her imprisonment at the Conti prison in Budapest, and her interrogation at the hands of the Security Police. As with films like *Carve Her Name With Pride* (1957), the interest is not so much in what she achieved, which was apparently very little, but rather her heroism in withstanding torture

and privation. Maruschka Detmers gives a creditable performance in the title rôle, well supported by Anthony Andrews as her Scottish commanding officer, and Donald Pleasance and David Warner as her contrasting interrogators. The screenplay is based on Hanna's diaries and the book *A Great Wind Cometh* by Yoel Palgi, a fellow Hungarian who originally recruited her. The film is old-fashioned in concept, but benefits from excellent production values and location filming in Hungary and Israel.

Two RCA/Columbia releases portray the Russian invasion of Afghanistan. Gary Reynold's *The Beast of War* (1988) is set in 1981, the second

year of the war. A column of Soviet T-62 tanks attacks and devastates a virtually defenceless village. A young tank driver called Constantine Doverchenko (Jason Patric) is appalled at the brutality of his comrades, particularly his tank commander Daskal (George Dzundza). After withdrawing from the village this tank gets separated and lost in a blind canyon. The Mujahideen, bitter at the destruction of their village, are determined to destroy it with their one RPG. Daskal is equally determined to bring his tank back, to the point of sacrificing the lives of his crew in achieving that end.

The film succeeds both as a drama, full of tension and gripping action

submarine dramas: Robert Wise's *Run Silent, Run Deep* (1958), starring Kirk Douglas and Burt Lancaster, and Delmer Davies' *Destination Tokyo* (1943).

Stylus Video have released a series of six World War Two colour documentaries under the collective title *Americans at War*. Most are famous in their own right, yet curiously they now appear under different titles. Hence William Wyler's *The Memphis Belle* (1944) and *Thunderbolt* (1945) become *B-17 Bomber* and *Fighter Squadron* respectively; John Huston's *Report from the Aleutians* (1944) becomes *Battle of the Islands*; *To The Shores of Iwo Jima* (1945) becomes *Battleground*; and *With the Marines at Tarawa* (1944) becomes *Marine Action*. The sixth, called *Submarine Warfare* (original title unknown), is the least successful, being a post-war documentary utilising dramatic reconstructions and model-work. The garish artwork on the sleeves does not do justice to these important films; the illustration on *B-17 Bomber* unforgettably depicts a B-24 Liberator!

Tomahawk have made available for the first time in this country a selection of German combat newsreels, the result of some painstaking restoration carried out on a collection originally found in a ruined building near Hanover. *Air, Land and Sea* contains a variety of sequences, including air attacks on the *Scharnhorst* and the *Gneisenau*, and the Dieppe raid. *Afrika Korps* shows Italian troops in action, hospital scenes and Rommel. *The Russian Front*, on two tapes, features some unique footage taken during several major battles. These originally silent films retain their German subtitles, but have been given soundtracks featuring sound-effects and German marching songs. Image quality is good but average running time is less than twenty-five minutes. Those interested should write to Tomahawk Films, East Wing, Clevedale, The Avenue, Twyford, Hampshire, SO21 1NJ.

That War in Korea is a feature-length documentary made for American television in the early 1960s by NBC. Richard Boone's narration explains the course of the war from the initial invasion by the North Koreans across the 38th Parallel to the final peace agreement. It is limited to the American point of view both in selection of film footage and narration, and its documentary value thus suffers in comparison with the two television series on the subject broadcast last year. It features an excellent original score by Robert Russell Bennett, but is interesting mainly as an example of propaganda made at a time when America was becoming increasingly involved in another war in South East Asia. As with many of GHM Entertainment's *Visions of War* series, no indication is given on the sleeve of the original production date. Given that, in this case, the production is over a quarter of a century old, this information should be regarded by the distributors as essential.

Stephen J. Greenhill

THE AUCTION SCENE

September is usually a busy time for the large auction houses, for that is the month when they emerge from their off-season repair, cleaning and re-arrangement period of the summer recess back into the hard world of competition. Late in the month there is also the London Arms Fair, which always attracts a number of foreign and out-of-town dealers, so there is a further incentive to hold arms and armour sales. Sotheby's, Christie's and Phillips all have sales during September, Sotheby's being the first away on the 12th of the month.

This sale was comparatively small with only 132 lots, mostly firearms, and fortunes were mixed. There was one big surprise when a Bavarian wheellock, estimated at £6,000—£8,000, reached an amazing £26,000. It was a good, untouched example with some minor damage but genuine throughout, and it may well have been this quality that persuaded two bidders to push the price so high since the estimate was quite realistic. The rest of the firearms which sold were nearly all at prices around the published estimates, although some volunteer Baker rifles in rusty but sound condition all sold for around £1,000; and a flintlock double-barrelled sporting gun by Joseph Manton at £4,000 more or less doubled its estimate. A fine cased Rigby percussion pepperbox with accessories sold for £2,000 and a LeMat percussion revolver, always a popular curiosity, realised £1,500. At the other end of the market a Manhattan Navy Type revolver made only £320; while pinfire weapons continue to climb in price, as instanced by a ten-shot Belgian revolver 'worn overall,' which made £450.

The edged weapons included a nice selection of Scottish basket-hilted swords as well as a number of late 19th and early 20th century officers' swords. This later group still sell at around the £150—£200 mark and for the collector of

limited means offer the chance to build up an interesting selection of weapons. The most unusual item was a North American Indian tomahawk dated 1793 and engraved with the name of an officer of the 26th (The Cameronians) Regiment. There was much interest in this, and the price soon exceeded the estimate by 200%, reaching £8,000.

Christie's sale followed on 20 September and was slightly larger with 188 lots; these were very mixed in quality, ranging from one lot of a South American knife and riding crop at £50 up to a superb cased double-barrelled percussion sporting gun which went for £30,000 to a buyer apparently prepared to go much higher. This sale also had a selection of Scottish edged weapons (are the clans being disarmed again?) and the dirks, of the late 18th and early 19th century, sold for around £600—£900. At the other end of the market a Swiss Holbein dagger and its sheath — the pattern for the Third Reich SS and SA dagger — sold for £2,400. A very good left-hand dagger of the late 16th century with silver decoration realised £8,000. Good cup-hilt rapiers of quality were sold at around £2,000, whilst an exceptional Neapolitan rapier of the mid-17th century reached £8,000, and a finely proportioned early 15th century sword sold at the low estimate of £10,000.

Unlike most of the London rooms, Wallis & Wallis of Lewes continue to hold sales through the summer, and their sale of 30 August, as always, included a good range of items at prices within the pocket of most collectors. Among the firearms it is interesting to note how the price of antique air weapons is gradually rising, and a good example of a Weyley and Scott Mark II pistol of about 1925–30 realised £310. A good massive *talwar* and sheath from India also reached £320. An unusual combined whip and dagger fetched £120, whilst a scissors dagger of the 19th

century sold for £100. The sale included a number of *shakudo kodzuka* handles sadly detached from their blades, but these attractive examples of Japanese crafts mostly sold at prices ranging from £60 to a top price of £105.

The militaria section of the sale included a marvellous variety of material from three shell cases for £25; a booby-trap match box which flared up when opened, £50; an Italian flag from Tobruk, £70; but interestingly a Luftwaffe trumpet banner made £600. Packages of military buttons, described by weight, sold at £12, whereas ten Georgian buttons of the East India Volunteers went for £60; and a Napoleonic War French POW strapwork box with a picture of the camp sold for £55.

A largely forgotten body, the Women's Royal Air Force of the First World War, was brought back into the limelight when a complete service dress uniform, khaki and not blue, went under the hammer; it was soon bringing in the bids, and went for £530 — an indication of its rarity.

The London Arms Fair has just finished, and as always it is useful in attempting to assess the market. The European contingent was very much in evidence and stronger than usual, but the home market was less well represented and attendance was slightly down. The majority of exhibitors seemed reasonably pleased with their business and the April Fair 1990 was fully booked. There was, however, a consensus of opinion that the arms and armour market was depressed, especially in the mid-range price bracket. Top quality, expensive items can be sold easily but the mid-range market is slow, whilst the lower end of the market seemed fairly static. The medal market was described as patchy, and the general feeling of the trade was that money was 'tight'. All this would seem to indicate that those with a little spare money might do well to bid now, and if buying from a dealer to haggle — he may be pleased to sell!

Frederick Wilkinson

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The Foreign Légionnaire at Camerone, 1863

LOUIS DELPÉRIER

The fame of the French Foreign Legion hardly needs to be stressed: 150 years after its formation, the fascination which it exercises can be judged by the volume of published work which it continues to inspire. Among the Legion's traditions, the commemoration of the engagement at Camerone, Mexico, in 1863 has made the date of 30 April the Legion's great annual feast. At the headquarters at Aubagne (before 1962, Sidi-bel-Abbès in Algeria) the wooden hand of Captain Danjou is paraded in front of the troops. Wherever they may find themselves, on that date each year all units of the Legion share simultaneously a few moments of introspective pride. In this article we shall return to the source of the myth, and trace as exactly as possible the true appearance of the légionnaire of Camerone.

THE LEGION IN MEXICO

Like the other regiments of the army of Napoleon III, the Legion became involved in the Mexican campaign of 1862-67 — a campaign embarked upon largely for financial reasons by France, Spain and Great Britain. After April 1862 this campaign was pursued by France alone, for political motives: the grandiose and unrealistic ambition of Napoleon III to graft on to Mexico a Latin and Catholic monarchy as a counter-balance to Anglo-Saxon influence in the South American continent. The outcome of this adventure is well-known: Napoleon's belated recognition that his army was tied down in an unwinnable impasse; the gradual withdrawal of 38,000 troops from 1866; and the death of the emperor whom Napoleon had imposed, the Austrian Archduke Maximilian, at the hands of a Juarist firing squad at Queretaro in June 1867.

Right:

Captain Adjutant-Major Jean Danjou, killed at Camerone. Born in 1829, this hero of the Legion was a Chevalier of the Legion of Honour at the age of 26, and had his left hand amputated at Sevastopol. Here he wears the campaign tunic, following the style of Zouave officers. (All photographs courtesy Bibliothèque du Musée de

l'Empéri, Salon de Provence)

Above:

The man who missed Camerone . . . Since Capt. Cazes had been injured during embarkation at Mers-el-Kebir, Lt. Ganz commanded the 3rd Co., 1st Bn. in April 1863; but was prostrated by fever on the 29th, his place being

It was during the first phase of operations, the gradual French advance on Mexico City, that the Legion immortalised an obscure ruined hamlet (named Camaron, but always rendered today in its French spelling) in the pestilential 'Hot Lands' between Vera Cruz and the Orizaba plateau.

On 19 January 1863 the order arrived at Sidi-bel-Abbès for the Legion to assemble a *régiment de marche* for Mexico, with a strength of one headquarters company and two battalions. Each battalion mustered one élite company (*Grenadiers* or *Voltigeurs*) and six companies of *Fusiliers*. Without examining

here the several reorganisations which the Legion had undergone in this period, we should note that prior to 14 December 1861 the Legion had comprised two regiments. On that date the 1^{er} *Étranger* was disbanded, its officers and men being transferred to the 2^e, which now took the official title *Régiment Étranger* (although the term 'Legion' remained in colloquial use). On 28 March 1863 48 officers, 1,432 men and eight *cantinières* disembarked at Vera Cruz.

The Legion was tasked with the security of convoys coming up from the coast to support the siege of Puebla: a difficult mission in a hostile countryside characterised by



taken by Capt. Danjou and S/Lts. Vilain and Maudet. One can easily imagine his feelings 48 hours later. Note the double gold lace of this rank, displayed in the Hungarian knots on the sleeves; the non-regulation light sabre often carried by officers in the field; the staff officer's sword-belt; and the fashionable neck-tie with long ends.

broken terrain, luxuriant vegetation, crushing heat, and raging fever.

THE ACTION AT CAMERONE

On 29 April 1863 Col. Jeanningros, at the regiment's headquarters at Chiquihuite, was warned that a convoy of siege matériel and gold bullion would be coming up from La Soledad, destined for the siege lines around Puebla. This intelligence also reached the Mexican commander of a local force of some 800 cavalry and 1,200 infantry. Jeanningros sent the 3rd Company, 1st Battalion back down the route which the convoy would be travelling, to assure its security. The 3rd Company – racked by fever, which would cost the regiment 800 dead by the end of the year – could muster only 62 NCOs and men. Its only officer being laid low, it was led on this mission by three officers from the HQ Company: the Captain adjutant-major, Jean Danjou; the standard-bearer, S/Lt. Maudet; and the paymaster, S/Lt. Vilain.⁽¹⁾ (Both subalterns were experienced ex-rankers.) Among the ranks of the 3rd Co. were Poles, Germans, Belgians, Italians, and Spanish, and many French.

At 1 a.m. on 30 April the company left Chiquihuite in the relatively cool darkness. The Mexican commander, Col. Milan, decided to wipe out the little command first, and to take the convoy later. What followed has been described many times; and is read aloud, in its official wording, to all légionnaires every 30 April to this day.

Briefly, the Mexican cavalry attacked the 3rd Co. in the open shortly after 6 a.m. The Legion company formed a hollow square and fought their way to the nearby ruins of the hacienda of Camerone – an adobe building with a partly walled corral, including some ruinous outbuildings – but lost about a quarter of their



Photographed at Puebla, S/Lt. Nomény of the Foreign Regiment displays various styles tolerated on campaign: the many-buttoned waistcoat, the flannel sash, riding boots, and the sombrero – here a rather fashionable example. Note also the rear vent decoration of the tunic sleeve: an exposed red lining, crossed by loops of gold lace engaging with small gilt ball buttons, the vent being edged with a continuation of the rank lace.

strength, and vital baggage mules, during their retreat through the scrub. Installed in the ruins, Capt. Danjou rejected a call to surrender, and made his men swear to hold out to the end. They had ammunition, but neither rations nor water. The first major attack against them was launched by the dismounted enemy cavalry.

In the blazing heat, under indifferent cover, the légion-

teau, Constantin, Wenzel, Kunassec and Gorski. A final Mexican assault brought half of them down, and overran all but a last corner of the ruined adobe lean-to outbuildings in the courtyard. Here Maudet, Maine, Leonard, Catteau, Wenzel and Constantin fired their last cartridges – then charged the swarming enemy with fixed bayonets. Maudet, Catteau and (probably) Constantin fell dead or wounded; Maine, Leonard and (probably) Wenzel were spared by the admiring Col. Combas – and even allowed to keep their arms, according to Maine.

The Legion had held out for ten hours, inflicting between 300 and 500 enemy casualties. The bullion convoy turned back safely; indeed, no other convoy was attacked in that sector before the fall of Puebla. Legion losses, from a strength of three officers and 62 NCOs and men, were: two officers, 22 other ranks killed in battle; one officer, eight other ranks died of wounds soon afterwards; 19 other ranks died later in captivity; 12 other ranks survived to be exchanged; and one man – the severely wounded Drummer Lai – evaded capture, to give the first account to the French relief column on the following day.

Inspiring as this action was, it was interpreted as a set-back by the commander-in-chief, Gen. Forey, who wrote in sober terms on 5 May '... In war, successes and reverses inevitably alternate; I can only hope that it is the successes which will prevail, in this harsh Mexican campaign.'

⁽¹⁾The *capitaine adjutant-major* was a senior captain whose duties included the training of the NCOs in each battalion. The standard itself remained at the colonel's headquarters.

THE UNIFORMS

We are neither the first nor the last to approach a subject widely studied in the past. It is surprising that so much uncertainty still hangs over some details, and that so many authors have ignored

Left:

General arrangement sketches of the 1858 (left) and 1860 greatcoats, the latter with a long-service chevron and corporal's rank stripes, both in red.

Below:

Wearing the 1860 regulation uniform, this sergeant of the Foreign Regiment was photographed on campaign accompanied by his wife. His long-service chevrons, like his single rank stripe, are in NCO's gold; each of the three represents five years' service (seven years, from 15 July 1866 onwards). They were worn on the left sleeve only.

these points. To this day, the archives give surprisingly little guidance on clearing up these uncertainties. There are three points of difficulty: the introduction of a new uniform in 1860; the fusion of the two Foreign Regiments in December 1861; and the adaption of the uniform under campaign conditions in Mexico.

Although somewhat partial and open to question, the succinct account of Cpl. Maine, published in *La Revue des Deux Mondes* of 15 July 1878, must be our point of departure:

'We wore summer uniforms: the little blue *veste*, [light]cloth trousers, and to protect us from the sun the enormous local sombrero, sturdily made of palm leaves, which had been issued to us by the military depots. Our weapons, like those of other units of the Expeditionary Corps, were the prestigious Minié carbine and the sabre-bayonet.'

The tunic

Assigned to the whole infantry arm by the regulations of 30 March 1860, the tunic was of dark blue cloth, and its cut was copied from that of the 1854 model of the *Chasseurs à Pied* of the Guard—who were publically idolised after their exploits in Italy in 1859.

The tunic closed by one row of nine large brass buttons, bearing the legend RÉGIMENT ÉTRANGER between two concentric circular lines. According to the 1860 regulations the centre of the button bore the regimental number, but after the amalgamation of the two Foreign Regiments this number was discontinued, the exact date and wording of this order now unfortunately being lost.

The rounded stand collar was of yellow cloth, and in the flank companies was decorated with a grenade or a bugle-horn respectively, in crimson cloth, applied to both collar fronts. In the Legion the tunic was piped crimson (in contrast to the yellow piping of the Line) around its front and bottom

edges, the top of the cuffs, the cuff-flaps, the belt-loop, the epaulette-loops, and on the tails. Fringed woollen epaulettes were worn: all red by *Grenadiers*, all yellow by *Vol-tigeurs*, and green with red crescents by *Fusiliers*.

Rank insignia (see 'MI' No.12, p.21) were in crimson wool. The long-service chevrons, to which many légionnaires were entitled, were worn on the tunic but not on the *veste*.

The veste

If the tunic was the regulation garment in Mexico, in fact it was the *veste* or stable-jacket which characterised the légionnaire at Camerone. Suppressed throughout the infantry arm by an order of 3 November 1860, the *veste* was retained by troops based in Africa, among them the Legion. In the same very dark blue as the tunic, it closed by a row of nine small uniform buttons. The rounded dark blue collar bore three-pointed patches of crimson cloth (absent from the *vestes* of Line infantry); on these patches flank companies wore an applied dark blue cloth grenade or bugle-horn.

In contradiction of regulations, but traditionally among African-based troops, the epaulettes were worn on *veste*. The straight, plain cuffs had a rear vent closed by a single small uniform button.

It is important to note that *sous-officiers*—in French usage, sergeants and above—did not wear the *veste*, receiving a second tunic in its place.

At the time of Camerone, it seems that the *veste* was in fact worn with only the bottom five buttons fastened, as permitted to African-based troops in summer dress, from May onwards. The cotton shirt, with its low standing collar, was thus visible; as was the *cravate* officially prescribed by the 1860 regulations—a rectangle of dark sky blue cotton measuring 1.5m x 42cm (59in. x 16½in.).

The greatcoat

Two models of greatcoat saw service in Mexico, both in heavy cloth of 'blued-iron



3rd Company, 1st Battalion, Foreign Regiment, 30 April 1863

A full nominal roll is difficult to find, and we are indebted to James Worden, Secretary of the Foreign Legion Association of Great Britain, for this list copied from the original compiled by Cdt. Regnault after questioning Lai and the 12 survivors of Mexican captivity exchanged in December 1863. Note that several names appear in different sources with minor variations of spelling, e.g. Main and Maine; Leonard, Leonhart and Leonhard, etc. This is understandable, given that many were probably taken down phonetically; that many members of the company spoke imperfect French; and that some were probably illiterate.

Officers

Capitaine Jean Danjou, Sous-lieutenant Napoleon Vilain, Sous-lieutenant Clement Maudet

Sous-officers

Sergeant-major Henri Tonel;

Sergents Marie Morzyki, Jean Germays, Alfred Palmaert, Karl Schaffner

Caporaux

Adolfo Delcaretto, Louis Favas, André Pinzinger, Karl Magnin, Philippe Maine, Evariste Berg
Tambour
Casimir Lai
Fusiliers

Aloysio Bernardo, Natale Bertolotto, Nikola Burgiser, Claude Billod, Jean Baas, Anton Bogucki, Felix Brunswick, Georg Catenhusen, Victor Cateau, Peter Conrad, Laurent Constantin, Constant Dael, Hartog Devries, Peter Dicken, Charles Dubois, Therese-Francois Daglines, Freidrich Freidrich, Freidrich Fritz, Georg Furbasz, Louis Groux, Aloys Gaener, Leon Gorski, Anton Heller, Emile Hipp, Adolphe Jeannin, Ulrich Konrad, Hans Kurz, Hippolyte Kunassec, Felix Langmeier, Freidrich Lemmer, Jean-Baptiste Leonard,

Louis Lernoold, Edouard Merlet, Johan Reuss, Ludwig Rohr, Josef Rebers, Daniel Seiler, Josef Schreiblich, Hermann Schiffer, Hans Seffrin, Josef Segers, Jean Timmermans, Pharaon van den Bulke, Josef van den Meersche, Luitpold van Opstal, Henri Vendersavel, Jean-Baptiste Verjus, Gottfried Wenzel, Karl Wittgens, Nikoli Zey.

A digest of Cdt. Regnault's report, published in issue No.1 of *Kepi Blanc* on 30 April 1947, lists the survivors handed over by the Mexicans as: 'Sgts. Schaffner and Palmaert; Cpls. Pinzinger, Maine, Berg, and Magnin; Fslrs. Fritz, Wensel, Brunswick, Canassec, Shreiblich, Leonhart' (all spellings as in original); and notes that 'Bauss' and 'Daglinck' - i.e. Baas and Daglines - had not been handed back and were in hospital at Jalapa, where they presumably died.

tion when shipped to Mexico. According to Maine, the 3rd Co. were wearing these trousers at Camerone. They were of conventional cut, straight and full in the leg, rather than the 'mi-bouffant' shape of the heavy crimson trousers.

The leather leggings were not worn with the lightweight trousers, which were confined by the 1855 model white cloth spatterdash **gaiters**, fastened up the outside by 11 small buttons. These gaiters varied hardly at all over several successive models. The cloth strap passing underneath the shoe was found to be too flimsy for service in Mexico and was officially replaced by a leather strap from 23 October 1865. The **footwear** were the blackened, nailed shoes called 'Godillots', after the most famous firm of suppliers.

The shako and forage cap

The all-leather model 1860 shako, popularly called 'the polish-box', had been authorised for the Legion along with the rest of the infantry. In fact the degree to which it was actually issued to the Legion is unknown; and it was certainly not taken to Mexico. The same remarks apply to the model 1860 forage cap. This *bonnet de police*, inspired

grey'. The old 1858 model had two rows of six front buttons; the 55mm-high stand collar had three-pointed patches, which in the Legion were dark blue. This coat was almost universal among the troops from Africa, including the Legion, these always being the last units to receive new items.

The 1860 greatcoat was of more modern cut, with two rows of four buttons, and a large falling collar; there were no collar-patches, and no loops for attaching epaulettes. Unusually in French practice, this greatcoat was not worn alone, but only over the tunic in cold weather. From 1867 orders revived the old practice of wearing a coat, adjusted for fit, over both summer and winter uniform when on campaign.

For pictorial evidence relevant to Camerone we turn to Eduard Detaille, but also to Jean-Adolphe Beaucé, in one of whose works dating from 1869 we can make out légionnaires wearing the 1858 greatcoat. This seems highly unconvincing, in view not only of the testimony of Cpl. Maine, but also of the climate of the 'Hot Lands', which rendered any garment heavier than the stable-jacket insupportable.

Heavy cloth trousers (pantalon de drap)

Another spectacular innovation of the 1860 regulations was the extension to the whole infantry arm of the baggy trousers termed 'à la chasseur', popularised by the Chasseurs of the Guard. In crimson cloth, they were both grotesque and impractical. The original model had two large frontal pleats, and had to be secured on the march by a button and buttonhole on the inside. On 7 March 1861 these were replaced by a rather better considered design, with 12 frontal pleats, fastened at the top of the ankle by a buttoned garter.

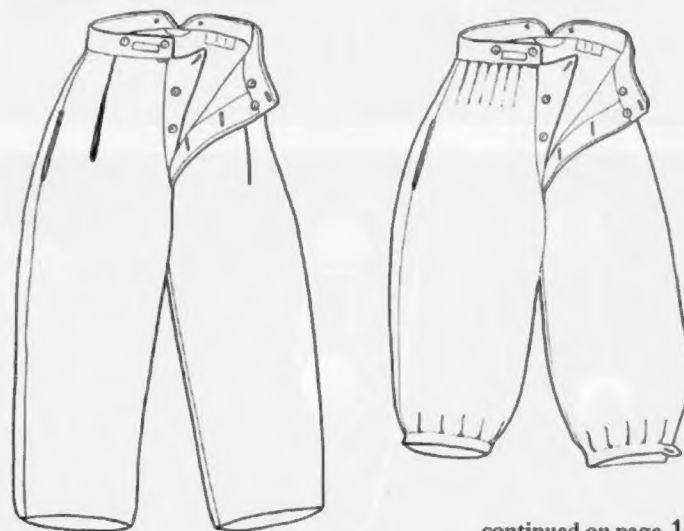
However impressive they may have been on parade or when walking-out, these trousers were found very uncomfortable in Mexico; the infantry were not used to such extremes of sartorial fantasy as the Zouaves, whose *esprit de corps* helped them to tolerate their own baggy 'Turkish' trousers.

An indispensable accessory to these trousers was a pair of **leggings**, made of sheep's leather coloured bright tan, edged with black leather, and fastened by a lace and a buckle. The wearing of these leggings without suffering actual injuries during long

marches took care and skill; they needed careful fitting to the individual, by soaking and stretching. Baffled by this new kit, infantrymen suffering from raw and swollen ankles could hardly believe the ability of veteran Zouaves to make 35km (21 mile) marches without apparent discomfort.

Light cloth trousers (pantalon de toile)

From 24 May 1860 the trousers of lightweight white cloth (coarse linen) which had previously been tolerated as a summer field garment were officially suppressed. Once more, the African garrison troops avoided this ordered change, to their great satisfac-



General arrangement sketches of the model 1860 (left) and 1861 uniform trousers in heavy garance-red cloth. (We have translated garance, a rich madder, as 'crimson' throughout this text, for simplicity; see colour photographs for the true shade.)

continued on page 16



Left:

This légionnaire's uniform is not that worn at Camerone, but it is nevertheless representative of the regulation dress during the Mexican campaign – that of the 1860 regulations. The képi is fitted with a non-regulation chinstrap. Cpl. Maine stated that the 3rd Co. was armed with this Chasseur carbine, but his testimony is hardly credible on that particular point. (Musée Napoléonien d'Histoire Militaire de Fontainebleau, photo Laurent Mirouze)

Above:

Corporal of Grenadier company and Fusilier, Foreign Regiment, Mexico, c.1863. Benigni's famous plate was executed in about 1930, drawing upon the work of an eyewitness of the campaign, Cdt Brecht – but Brecht's pictures showed the 95th Line Infantry, not the Legion. Many details are nevertheless entirely credible: the 'panama' hat worn on disembarka-

tion; the sturdy gaiters of greatcoat cloth replacing the regulation leggings and white gaiters; and the large, non-regulation 'belly pouch' adopted by some soldiers of the 81st and 95th Line, and also, no doubt, by many légionnaires.

Below left:

Rear view of the skirts of an 1860 basquine tunic of the Legion; the stars were the regulation skirt ornament of the Fusilier companies, replaced by grenades and bugle-horns in the flank companies. Note that at Camerone the tunic was worn in place of the veste only by sergeants and above.

Below:

The légionnaire of Camerone no doubt fought in a képi similar to this example, with a regimental number '1' on the band; but there remains some uncertainty about the actual képi device worn by the Legion between 1862 and 1867. (Private collection)

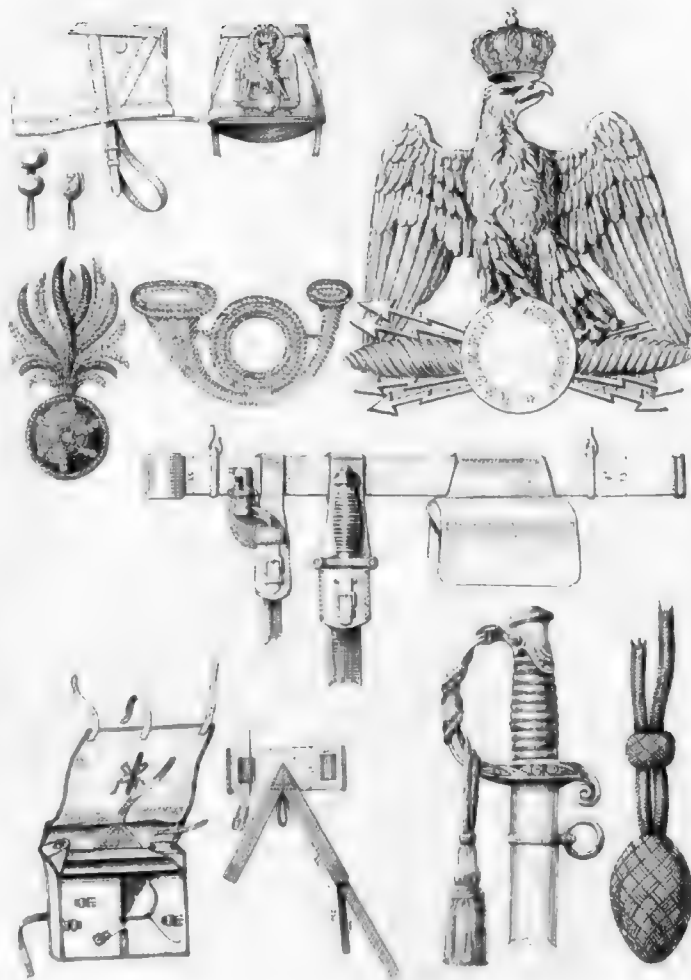


As far as the current state of our knowledge allows, this reconstruction attempts to show the appearance of the légionnaire as he actually fought at Camerone—and in particular, that of Cpl. Phillipe Maine, one of the 13 survivors. His rank insignia, largely obscured here by the typically turned-back cuff of this veste, are double diagonals of garance-red woollen braid. Since the 3rd Co. were Fusiliers, only the sergeants and corporals would have carried the cumbersome 1831 'cabbage-cutter' sidearm. The white havelock was in no sense

special to the Legion at this date, being worn by many other units in Africa and Mexico; its particular association with the Legion evolved in the period 1871-1914, when légionnaires gradually adopted the custom of wearing it at all times except when in full parade dress. The sash, worn in a variety of colours, was often extremely ample, and some photographs of officers show it covering the torso from breastbone to groin. It was a practical campaign item, and when wound tightly gave considerable support to the lower back.



Illustrations from the regulations of 1860; note that some of these items were not, in practice, carried by the Legion in Mexico – see text for details: Top left, shako, above pompons worn by flank and Fusilier companies; top right, shako plate of the Foreign Regiment, doubtless introduced in 1862. Centre left, tunic collar devices embroidered in gold: the grenade worn by officers of Grenadiers, and of the regimental staff; the bugle-horn worn by officers of Voltigeurs. Centre right, rankers' belt with bayonet, NCOs' and flank companies' 1831 'sabre', and cartridge pouch; the brass sliders engage here with hooks from the knapsack straps. Bottom left, model 1854 knapsack. Bottom right, hilt of officers' sabre, with undress knot of black silk in detail.



by that worn by the British Foot Guards in the Crimea, had a crimson crown piped in dark blue, and a dark blue turn-up piped crimson. It had a dark blue tassel at the front of the crown, and dark blue company ornaments – a grenade, a bugle-horn, or a star for the Fusiliers – on the front surface.

The képi

This was in fact the characteristic headgear throughout the Expeditionary Corps in Mexico. The squared-peak képi to which the Second Empire soldier was so attached was officially suppressed in mainland France between 1860 and 1867. In Africa, however, an order of 18 October 1860 specified that 'the visored forage cap will be the only provisional headgear while awaiting the arrival of shakos and new-model forage caps.'

Identical orders subsequently circulated to units allow us to deduce that the officially 'provisional' became 'definitive'. In fact, the use of the képi would become not only tolerated, but recognised, each time that troops were sent on campaign outside France (e.g. to China and Syria). In Mexico all units provided with the shako also received the képi from 30 December 1862. It is therefore not surprising that the Legion in Mexico was most often seen wearing the model 1858 képi.

This had a crimson crown, the band and pipings being in

dark blue; the overall height was 120mm at the front and 160mm at the rear (4¾in. and 6½in.); and the square-cornered leather peak was 50mm (2in.) wide at the centre.

Some uncertainty still clouds the question of the badge worn at the front centre of the band. Before the formation of the single *Régiment Étranger* in 1862 the cap device was the number '1' or '2', 35mm (1½in.) high, and cut out of crimson cloth – according to the regulation of 1858. In fact the numbers used were made of brass, 22mm (¾in.) high; these came off the old 'African caps', which the Legion had been the last to wear. We believe that in 1863 the cap device was the cut-out crimson '1'; but it would be satisfying to have documentary confirmation, which is so far not to be found. It was not until 2 December 1867 that the device became a five-point star.

The typical accessory worn with the képi in Mexico, by all categories of troops

including the Legion, was the white cotton havelock; this was ordered into use by Gen. Forey on 30 August 1862, and the order was repeated on 22 February 1863, mentioning a current laxness over its use through loss or negligence. Basically a complete képi-cover with a hanging neck-flap, it existed in a number of variants.

As for the use of the képi at Camerone, we concur with the opinion of the late Jean Brunon, the great specialist on Legion uniform: the sombrero was simply used for protection on the march, and was discarded in favour of the more practical and military képi in action.

Hats

When they disembarked at Vera Cruz the légionnaires probably wore a 'panama'-type straw hat with a flat brim, covered with a shaped white cloth, with a black ribbon. We believe that these were purchased during a call at Martinique, like those of the Legion's brigade-mates of

the 7th Line. However, Jean Brunon believed that the headgear was in fact the straw 'sennet' worn in tropical waters by the seamen of the French Navy, issued to the soldiers on the troop ships as a matter of convenience.

Between 1863 and 1867 the képi was certainly worn side by side with the local sombrero, purchased by the supply service and distributed to units. On the intermitable marches which characterised the infantry's service in Mexico the sombrero was worn gratefully; the képi was carried in or strapped to the haversack, or under the flap of the knapsack.

Equipment and weapons

The personal equipment of the légionnaire at Camerone had been reduced to the belt and associated items (see captions); the light cloth haversack introduced from 30 April 1861; and the small rectangular water-bottle, with either one or two spouts. A report by Col. Jeanningros on 4 May 1863 specified that the length of required marches should take account of the fact that the men had no knapsacks.

The testimony of Cpl. Maine is particularly problematic on the question of weapons. He declared that the men of the 3rd Co. were armed with the *Chasseur à Pied* carbine. In the bulk of the regiments of the Expeditionary Corps this carbine was the exclusive armament of the *Voltigeur* companies, the *Grenadiers* and *Fusiliers* carrying the model 1842T or 1822Tbis percussion rifle. This was the case throughout the African garrison troops from 1855 onwards; and we have difficulty in believing that the Legion was exceptional in this matter. The rifle was issued with the 1847 model socket bayonet.

The model 1831 infantry 'sabre' – in fact a heavy, antique-style *glaive*, used almost exclusively as a camp tool – was issued only to NCOs and corporals, to men of the flank companies, to pioneers, drummers, buglers and musicians.



The ammunition carried by each man on 30 April 1863 amounted to 60 rounds – four packets in the pouch, and six in the haversack.

OFFICER'S UNIFORMS

Legion officers in Mexico wore an everyday campaign uniform very similar to that worn by those of all other infantry units: a uniform which was adopted due to experience in the conquest of Algeria and the Crimean War.

The 1860 regulations specified a tunic similar to that of the rank and file, but with skirts 475mm (18½in.) long. This was made of black cloth (as had been the case since the mid-1850s, although 'dark blue' continued to be specified until 1914). The 1860 tunic was strictly a garrison or barracks uniform.

On campaign, officers wore a tunic of Zouave style, entirely of black cloth, with one row of nine large gilded uniform buttons, and no pleats below the waist. Rank was indicated not by epaulettes as on the 1860 tunic, but by gilt lace Hungarian knots on the sleeves. As the regimental 'captain adjutant-major' Capt. Danjou wore three lines of lace, the central one in silver; Vilain⁽²⁾ and Maudet would both have worn single lines of gold lace. Since all three officers served with the regimental headquarters, all wore its distinctive gold-embroidered grenade on the collar. (Offi-



cers of Grenadier companies wore the same; those of Voltigeurs, a gold-embroidered bugle-horn).

The tunic was often worn open over a black waistcoat, with a small standing collar and one row of small gilt buttons. The loosely-cut trousers were of fine crimson cloth, without side-stripes or piping. The sword-belt was that of infantry officers (see 'MI' No.12, p.23), or of staff officers, the latter being narrower and fastening by two lion-head medallions. They carried infantry officers' sabres, either the straight field officer's model or the

slightly curved junior officer's model.

Conforming to the customs of African campaigning, both officers and men often adopted a broad flannel body-belt wrapped round the waist under the belt. Still worn today as a traditional item, the blue sash of the Zouaves was not officially adopted by the Legion until 25 March 1884; in the 1860s various colours were worn, red or green being apparently as popular as blue.

The képi worn was that specified for officers of infantry and Zouaves, distinguished by small gilt regi-

Left:

Photographs like this one, which records the appearance of the common légionnaire in Mexico, are very rare. He wears a képi fitted with a chinstrap and a havelock, and displays the medal for the Mexican campaign instituted by Imperial decree on 29 August 1863.

Above:

Rarer still are photographs of French troops in Mexico taken out of doors. This blurred but exceptional contemporary record shows the bivouac of the 4th Co., 3rd Bn. of the Foreign Regiment (Capt. Couston) at Escamela in February 1867, shortly before the Legion's departure from Mexico on the 24th of that month.

mental buttons at the ends of the gold lace false chinstrap (though these were often replaced by plain gilt half-ball buttons). The crown was of fine crimson cloth, the band of black cloth, and the decoration of flat gold lace. (Again, for more details see p.23 'MI' No. 12, which applies equally to 1863).

* * *

The Mexican campaign is often described in France as 'the most unpopular war of the century'. Nevertheless, it was the scene of an engagement which presented a classically pure example of the 'beau geste'. The words of Col. Jeanningros, uttered on the day after the fight at Camerone, would prove prophetic:

'The company is dead on the field of honour; but their glory is going to leave reverberations . . .'

MI

Sources:

Archives du Service Historique de l'Armée de Terre, Vincennes: Campagne du Mexique et armée d'Afrique, series G7, H. Collection du Journal Militaire Officiel.

⁽²⁾Vilain had been awarded the British military service medal for the Crimea, and in the fashion of the day was presumably wearing it at Camerone.

British Field Works 1914-18 (1): Trenches and Wire



DAVID D. VICKRIDGE
Painting by PAUL HANNON

Though often chaotic, and ravaged by shellfire and the elements, the trenches of the Great War were not haphazard constructions. It is also true that while armies remained virtually static, the trenches in which they dwelt were in a constant state of evolution. This first part of a serial article on the physical environment of the Western Front, as experienced by the British infantryman, describes and illustrates basic trench systems and wiring practice.

1914: THE END OF MOBILE WARFARE

The belief that the war could only be won by movement and attack was common to all

Above:

A rare picture of British soldiers trench-digging, c.1915. The ground has been measured first and marked out with wooden pegs, and a traverse is already appearing on the right. Earth has been heaped to the front only and is being covered with sods to disguise the excavation. (Author's collection)

Centre right:

The 'modern fire trench', from Edmund Dane's *Trench Warfare*, 1915; purpose-built rather than developed in stages, it is a series of short fire bays separated by traverses.

Right:

The ideal British trench system of the winter of 1914-1915, from contemporary manuals. There are two lines, the 'fire' trench and the 'cover' trench, linked by the communication trenches. The 'cover' trench is characterised by a series of dugouts with overhead cover.

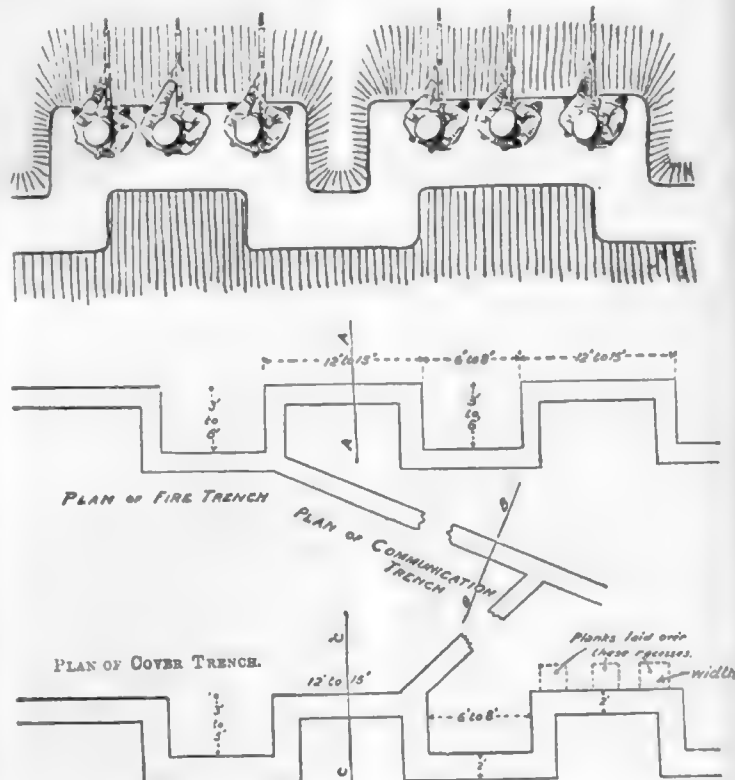
the major armies of Europe. Trenches were an old idea; yet while recent wars offered examples of large and bloody sieges, like that of Port Arthur in the Russo-Japanese War, the trench had always been a part of a greater mobile whole. Field works were frequently dug in the American Civil War, and in the Boer War; but in these wide open spaces, with relatively few pieces of heavy artillery and the few machine guns usually deployed as a species of artillery, the trench could not become the dominating feature⁽¹⁾.

In the British Army siege works were seen as the province of the Royal Engineers and those troops who manned home forts. Field works were a very different matter, as the 1911 *Manual of Field Engineering* pointed out:

'By field fortification is implied all those measures which may be taken for the defense of positions intended to be only temporarily held. Works of this kind are executed either in the face of the enemy or in immediate anticipation of his approach . . . field fortification presupposes a defensive attitude and, though recourse to it may under certain circumstances be desirable, IT MUST ALWAYS BE REGARDED AS A MEANS TO AN

END, AND NOT AN END IN ITSELF'⁽²⁾.

It was confidently assumed that such works were a temporary if necessary evil. The main factors governing their construction were the parameters of terrain, the size and shape of the soldier, and weapons capability. Measurement of Tommy determined that, lying down, he could comfortably fire over cover a foot high; kneeling, three feet high; and standing, four feet six inches. Turning to the



rifle, it was found that the penetrative ability of the modern *spitzgeschoss* or pointed bullet was as follows: brickwork, 9-14in.; chalk, 15in.; sand, confined between boards or in bags, 18in.; sand, loose, 30in.; hardwood, 38in.; earth, free from stones, 40in.; soft wood, 58in.; clay, 60in.; and dry turf or peat, 80 inches⁽³⁾.

At this stage it was not thought that heavy artillery would be deployed specifically to breach field fortifications, so the main effort in this area was against the direct effect of shrapnel and splinters from field gun rounds. In the absence of better materials the main defence was likely to be earth.

To achieve the desired results each infantryman was equipped with the entrenching 'Implement (Pattern 1908)'; additionally, the battalion was supplied with 226 'Shovels G.S.' and 151 picks. For woodwork there were 17

felling axes, eight hand axes, 43 bill hooks, 20 reaping hooks and 32 folding saws. Amongst the other equipment were 24 wirecutters, eight crowbars and 30 sandbags. Given a shovel and reasonable conditions the soldier was expected to shift a cubic foot of earth in three minutes, and to complete a rudimentary standing fire trench for one in an hour and forty minutes.

Earth was not only the most valuable defence, it was certainly the most available. Sandbags were a comparative rarity in the first months of the war, and brushwood, gabions, sacks, sods and timber were all used in revetments. Barbed wire was similarly in very short supply, so obstacles were supplemented with such crude expedients as caltrops and planks studded with nails. To later trained observers like Lt. Edmund Blunden, 'Field Works Officer' of the 11th

Bn., Royal Sussex Regiment in 1916, these early efforts were flimsy to the point of quaintness when compared with the cement and the methodical construction of later years.

Often it was only possible to construct 'lying down cover' - a shallow scrape 6ft. 6in. long, with the earth piled to the front. Time permitting, this could be converted to 'kneeling cover' by excavating to a depth of 18 inches. Piling the earth to the front of this brought the rampart at the front to the magic yard high. The final stage was the most laborious, as 'standing cover' required a further 18 inches. Much more time was needed if this basic structure was to be embellished with such luxuries as 'funk holes' or small dugouts under the parapet, or recesses for handy supplies of ammunition. Blunden was probably right when he said that they would withstand very little; but the

early excavations filled a vital role in keeping as much of the soldier's body covered as was possible⁽⁴⁾.

It was also important, as *Notes on Field Defences* observed, that trenches be laid out to give the maximum field of fire whilst denying the enemy a clear view of the position. Practical experience had now proved that the best form was: '... deep, narrow, and with low command. The rifle, when resting on the parapet, must sweep the ground immediately in front ... strong traverses should be provided

Australian signallers going up a communication trench near Neuve Eglise, May 1917. This picture shows both how trenches could cross obstacles and themselves be traversed. In the foreground a simple wooden footbridge has been used to link the trench across a shell hole or depression; a wooden frame with netting prevents the sandbagging from subsiding. In the background, cavalry cross a trench bridge of logs. (IWM Q6183)



every four yards or so to localise the effect of high explosive shell falling into the trench, and also give protection against enfilade fire⁽⁵⁾.

Earth from the holes was now placed behind as well as in front of the line. This 'parados' both prevented a clear silhouette being shown of the occupants and gave a measure of protection from shells dropping behind. Complete concealment of the trench was difficult, but often they ran along hedgerows or lanes so that they were covered from the front. Elsewhere dummy trenches were dug to lessen the fire directed at the real positions. These dummies need only be as little as 6in. deep, with careful cutting and distribution of the earth to fool enemy airmen⁽⁶⁾.

These were quite simple theories; but local conditions and varied application made the trenches dug in the summer of 1914 anything but uniform. As Capt. J.C. Dunn recorded of the 2nd Bn., Royal Welsh Fusiliers near Vicq at the end of August:

'No one seemed to have a very clear idea of how they were to be sited or of what pattern they were to be, so A Company dug a length of wretched one-hour shelter trench with our small entrenching tools. Others scraped out rifle-pits in the

banks of dykes . . . 'The next day they were digging again: 'with our entrenching tools, for the few proper picks and shovels in the company tool cart were not nearly enough to go round. We started to dig several times, because Brigade sent order after order amending the previous one, so Major Williams went to Brigade to find out what was really wanted . . . We had hardly scratched the soil, and eaten some bully-beef and biscuit, when we moved off again.'

Finally they arrived near Jenlain and, borrowing long handled shovels from some French territorials, they dug

some 'real' trenches; lack of sandbags was compensated by filling the men's packs with earth⁽⁷⁾.

FLANDERS AND THE SOMME

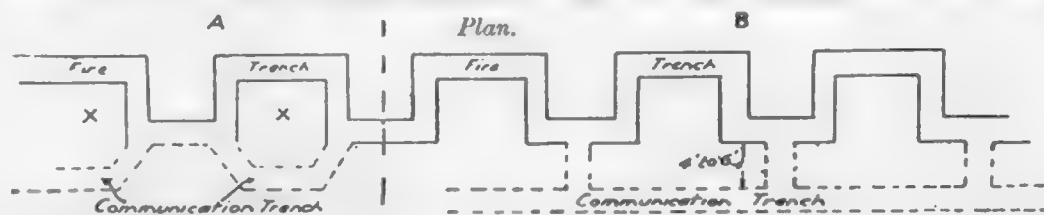
By October 1914 the main German thrust had been blocked on the Marne and the BEF was transferred north to the left hand of the line so that, together with the Belgian Army, they now occupied the sector from the coast to the Somme. Whilst it was now tacitly admitted that this new line would have to be kept for a period of months, and that the strength of the German positions required

methods approximating to 'regular siege operations', the terrain of Flanders presented special problems.

Most important, the land was generally so low that the water table was a mere two or three feet below the surface. Digging too deep or heavy rain left trench garrisons standing in a permanent foul soup, leading to 'trench foot' and other illnesses. Drains or pumping achieved no permanent relief. The only solution was not to dig down but rather to build up breast-works, forming what were known variously as 'parapet', 'command', or 'box' trenches. These were tolera-

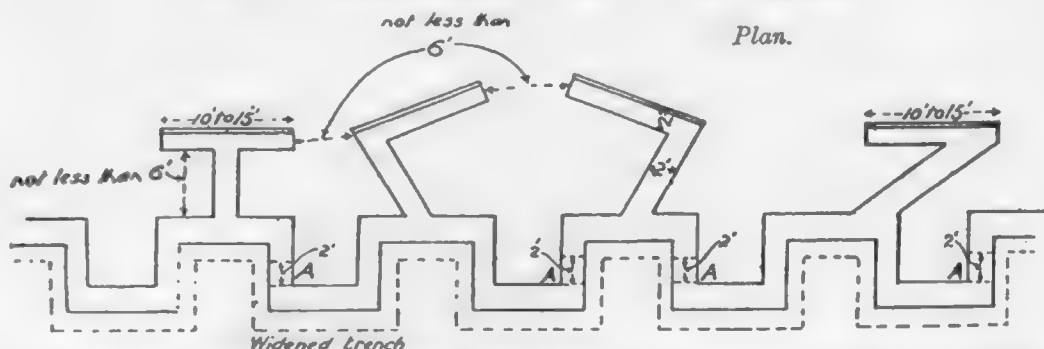


FIG. 3.—COMMUNICATIONS IN REAR OF FIRE TRENCHES.



Two methods of making communication behind existing fire trenches. Method A should not be used when the ground is likely to become very wet.

FIG. 4.—COMMUNICATIONS IN REAR OF FIRE TRENCHES.



An existing fire trench can be widened into this form, or a trench can be dug of a suitable trace, traversed or zig-zag as a communication trench, and the T or L fire trenches dug or sapped out from it.

Lancashire Fusiliers at the entrance to a communication trench running from 'Hyde Park Corner' at the corner of Ploegsteert Wood to the front line, January 1917. Notice that this is a 'command' trench built up on waterlogged ground rather than dug into it. The sandbagging is textbook 'English bond', revetted with corrugated iron and wooden posts. The second man wears thigh-length gumboots, commonly issued in wet areas from 1915 onwards. Under his feet is typical duckboarding of wooden slats. (Imperial War Museum, Q4647)

Right:

Methods of making additional communication trenches running parallel to the front, from Notes From the Front Part III, 1915. These extra passages helped prevent dangerous overcrowding in the fire trench and eased the progress of reserves and fatigue parties. Fig. 4 shows extra saps with fire trenches dug out into 'No Man's Land', in advance of the original line.

bly secure but required enormous labour to construct. Worse, they were painfully obvious islands in the mire which could not help but attract artillery.

In other places previous habitation brought difficulties. Robert Graves, then a captain in the Royal Welsh Fusiliers, was just one of many to comment on the habits of their allies at Fricourt on the Somme:

'The trenches were wide and tumble-down, too shallow in many places, and without sufficient traverses. The French had left relics both of their nonchalance – corpses buried too near the surface; and of their love of security – a number of deep though lousy dug-outs. We busied ourselves raising the front line parapet and building traverses to limit the damage of the trench mortar shells that fell continuously'⁽⁸⁾.

The men of Tunnelling Company 174 also remarked on the mess, most importantly that bodies were allowed to lie on the floor of the trench which had become progressively shallower, exposing more of the living to the enemy'⁽⁹⁾.

The condition of French trenches has become a cliché, but there were reasons why this should be so. Most importantly, the French were unwilling to admit that part of their territory was lost. To dig neat, deep and time-consuming works was not only un-French, it was tantamount to an admission of defeat. It was not surprising that old trenches of any sort should look uninviting; they had been fought over, and now looked cramped and old-fashioned compared to the advances in construction that were now being made.

These advances came in virtually every field: new manning arrangements, new weapons, better transport, supply and materials. Now each brigade put only two of its battalions up in the front line and two were held back, one in 'support' and another in 'reserve'. Even within each battalion only half the man-



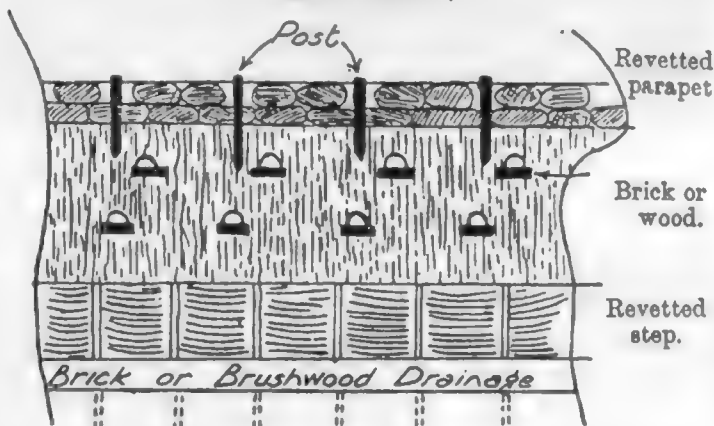
FIG. 6.—"SORTIE STEPS" IN FIRE TRENCHES.

Section.



FIG. 7.

Interior elevation.



One stout post to be driven into parapet about 1 foot in front of trench and two steps to be cut in interior slope as shown for each man.

Hold rifle in right hand, place left foot in lower step, pull up with left hand grasping post, place right foot in upper step, then left foot on top of parapet.

power would actually be in the front trench. Thus, unless a 'big show' was in progress, only a small proportion of the army was likely to be right at the sharp end of the war at any moment'⁽¹⁰⁾. It was also

important that the infantry took on many responsibilities which had previously been the duty of Field Engineer companies, like wiring and revetting. The engineers now supervised new works and

Fixing up scaling ladders before the battle of Arras, April 1917. In this very crude but deep section of trench the walls stay up merely by dint of the amount of chalk in the soil. Going 'over the top' from a deep trench was particularly hazardous, requiring either 'sally' or 'sortie' steps cut in the wall, or ladders. Here basic wooden ladders are held in place by large pegs. Two of the working party wear sleeveless jerkins over their uniform. Fore-ground right is a supply of 'toffee apple' bombs for trench mortars. (IWM Q6229)

Left:

Also from Notes From the Front, an illustration of the construction of 'sortie steps' allowing the troops to go 'over the top' that much quicker.

also established dumps of wire, sandbags, tools and loophole plates behind the line. Usually the materials were delivered to the dumps by the Army Service Corps, but collected for the trenches by the 'Brigade Transport Officer'. Final distribution was then by carrying parties provided by the infantry themselves'⁽¹¹⁾. Furthermore, a complete Pioneer Battalion was added to each infantry division. Deployed specifically on trench building and road repair, these units took a great deal of weight off the shoulders of the front line troops.

DEFENCE IN DEPTH

Even by the beginning of 1915 the desirability of defence in depth was realised. Crowding too many men into a single line had drawbacks: they were vulnerable to bombardment, and there was no suitable location to shelter reserves, dressing stations and latrines. The obvious answer was second line or support trenches, connected to the front by winding communication trenches. Very quickly third lines were dug, and in some places defensive belts finally reached anything up to ten lines deep.

In the idealised plan the front line fire trenches were sturdy and well concealed, with frequent traverses to

minimize the effects of both enfilading fire and high explosive shell. It was not desirable that the plan be too regular because this made it

easy to observe, and would take insufficient account of natural features. Furthermore the front line was not to be directly parallel to the wire,

as this would allow enemy artillery to calculate its exact location; instead re-entrants and strongpoints were created to allow interlocking

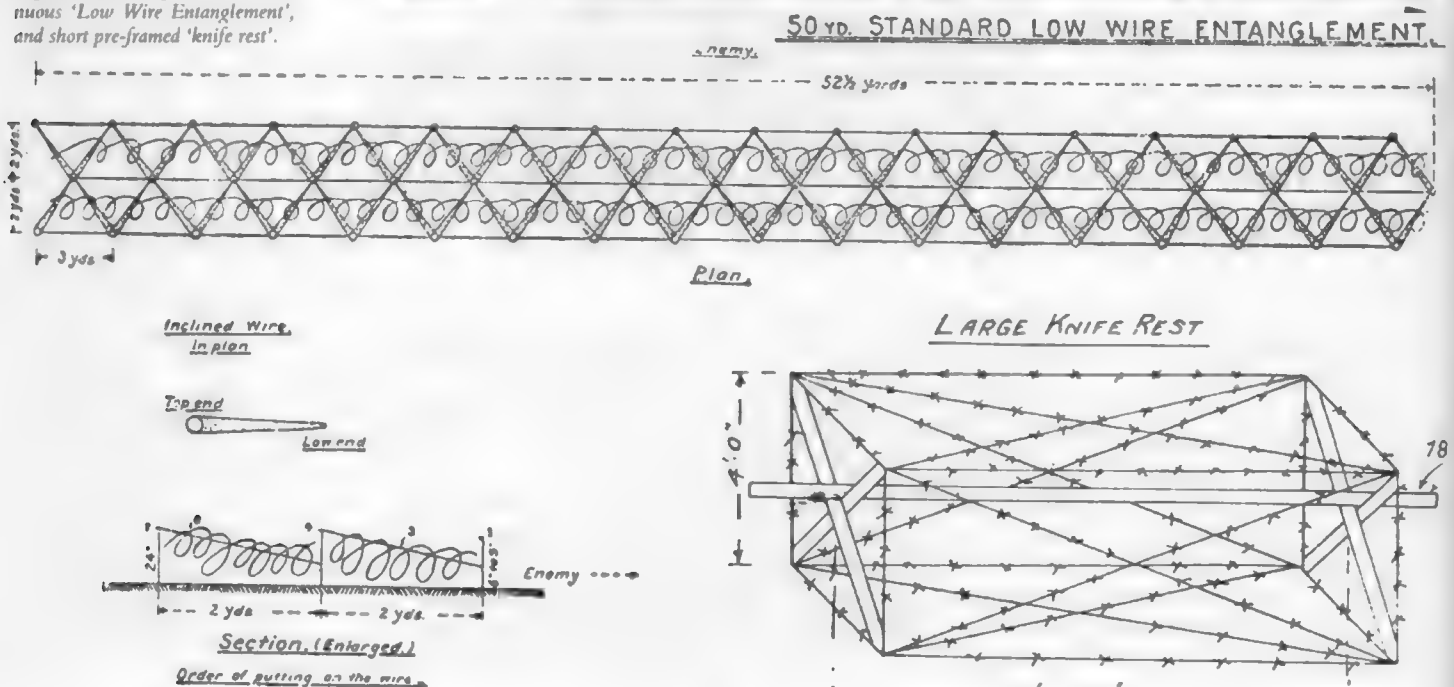
Right:

January 1918: wiring party of the York & Lancaster Regt. move down a trench in the Oppy-Gavrelle sector. The wire is rolled for easy carriage, and the man on the right appears to be fixing some to a wooden stake. When laying wire out in front the quietest forms of stake or picket were the most useful; late in the war the most widespread was probably the metal 'screw picket' which could be twisted into soft ground without hammering. Wooden pegs or stakes were also used in conjunction with muffled mallets or hammers. The man nearest the camera wears the Pattern 1908 web equipment with the 'box respirator' over the top; the man on the right has Pattern 1914 leather equipment. (IWM Q8436)



Below:

Plates from Instructions on Wiring, 1918 showing both the continuous 'Low Wire Entanglement', and short pre-framed 'knife rest'.



zones of fire, and to surprise the enemy.

The second line was best placed well back from the first so that it could not be overwhelmed simultaneously, and would force the enemy to advance with caution. Even so, intermediate positions immediately behind the front line were often provided, so that a lost section of front line could be bombed into, and carrying parties could move to and fro. The second line usually contained fewer firing positions and more overhead cover, but it was also the main location of the Vickers machine guns with their posts set at various angles to the front⁽¹²⁾. After 1915 flexible forward defence from shell holes and positions near the wire was usually the province of the Lewis gun⁽¹³⁾. Second line posts were also established for trench mortars, usually in pairs; rifle grenadiers; and signal stations.

New materials were a major factor in developing trench design. Wooden frames were made up in workshops behind the line for dugouts or revetments, and then moved up whole or in sections for easy erection.

Corrugated iron was also important; flat sheets could be used for revetting, though it was desirable for small 'weep' holes to be cut in it so that water would not build up behind. 'XPM' or 'Expanded Metal Sheets' 6ft. 6in. by 3ft. were useful, if expensive at £2 10s. a crate. They could be used directly as revetting, or for the construction of gabions.

Sandbagging was developed into an art form. The most critical factor when building with them was that they should be filled with the same amount and beaten to approximately the same dimensions – usually three-quarters filled and then compacted to a rectangle 20 inches by ten by five. Ideally a filling party was three men, two holding and tying the bags while a third shovelled in the earth. Those building with the bags worked in pairs, and provided that enough hands were available for carrying they were expected to proceed at about 60 bags an hour. A significant disadvantage of the sandbag was that it rotted quickly; and it is notable that most modern reconstructions, as at Vimy or the

'Trench of Death' at Dixmude, have opted for the less accurate but more durable medium of cement.

Most British sandbag builders used 'English bond' in their construction – laying alternate courses of 'headers', at right angles to the face, and 'stretchers', longest side parallel to the wall. The 'chokes' or tied ends of the bag were placed next to the earth leaving, as far as possible, a neat and seamless face on the inside wall of the trench. Where sandbags were used in quantity they also became ideal camouflage, not only tied over periscopes and helmets but concealing loopholes or observation points.

Sods were often used in the same way as sandbags and were ideally cut to similar dimensions. Often they were pegged into place using a split picket or other convenient spike⁽¹⁴⁾.

Armour was used in both sniping and observation loops, but contrary to popular belief the plates used were not completely bulletproof as they could be penetrated by the ordinary rifle bullet at point blank range, or by special armour-piercing bullets.

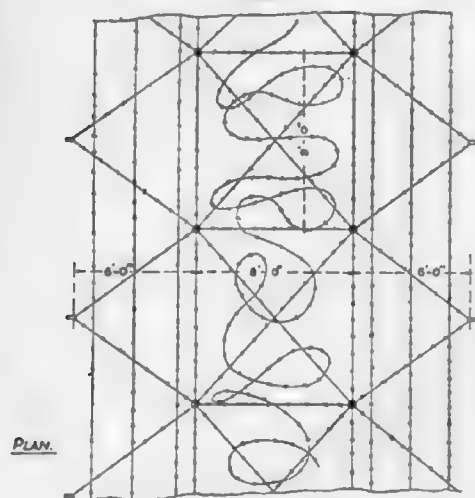
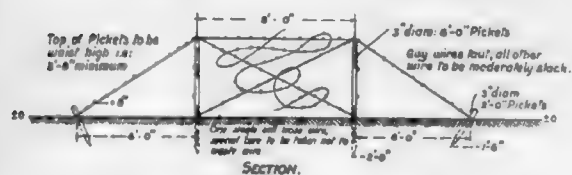
They were not usually set proud of the surface but into sandbag walls or strong-points.

Wiring

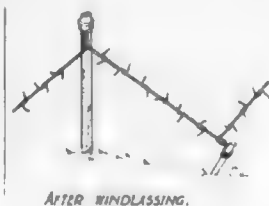
Wiring similarly became a highly skilled business, though the exposure of the wire belts to enemy fire made night work most common, and 'wiring parties' on forward lines were an unpopular fatigue. Muffled mallets helped to avoid detection, but opinion varied as to the best course of action when lit by an enemy starshell: one school of thought held that the party should freeze; the other, that they should scatter immediately and throw themselves flat.

Wire obstacles were of two main types: general protective lines, just far enough from the trenches to prevent the enemy throwing grenades in; and tactical obstacles 50 to 100 yards from the trench, designed to channel attacking enemy infantry onto the machine guns. In the best defences wire was laid so as to be wholly or partly out of sight, in hollows, ditches or woods. Very often there were several belts, and some-

HIGH WIRE ENTANGLEMENT.



METHOD FOR FIXING HORIZONTAL WIRE ON WOOD POSTS



TYPICAL OBSTACLE ZONE



Sketches from Fieldworks for Pioneer Battalions, 1918, detailing methods of fixing wire; the fearsome 'high wire entanglement'; and

how whole zones were planned to maximize the effects of the different types with enfilading MG fire.



C

D

B

A

Paul Harmon

Paul Hannon's reconstruction opposite shows a trench-repair party in 1917, with various tools and construction materials. (A) & (B) Privates, 16th Service Battalion (2nd County Down), Royal Irish Rifles. This was the Pioneer Bn. of 36th (Ulster) Division from January 1915. Fig. A wears the popular and practical leather trench jerkin over the standard issue 'greyback' shirt. The jerkin, introduced in the winter of 1914 and often made of offcuts of leather, varied in shade from light tan to dark brown, and fastened with four leather-covered buttons. Fig. B, stripped to his open shirt, shows the woollen vest issued only in cold weather, and one of several types of issue braces. He wears a soft knitted cap comforter, to which his regimental cap badge is pinned; and has sandbags tied round his puttees as extra protection against mud. He fills sandbags with a GS spade.

(C) Lieutenant, Royal Engineers. This supervising officer, consulting a trench map, wears typical officer's khaki Service Dress with a 'B' pattern steel helmet in a custom-made drill cover, stout gloves for handling wire, and trench boots; he carries a 1917 small box respirator. He confers with (D) Sergeant, 16th Bn. Royal Irish Rifles, this displaying the 36th Division's 'Red Hand of Ulster' battle insignia.



A sentry of the 10th Bn., Gordon Highlanders at the junction of Gourlay Trench and Gordon Alley, Martinpuich, August 1918. Though neatly signposted these trenches are totally unrevetted, with no evidence of sandbags. Most British trenches were named or numbered, and very often all those in one sector would begin with the same letter. In narrow or crowded places there were also one-way systems with some communication trenches earmarked for movement to the front and others away. (IWM Q4180)

Below:

Fire trenches near Nieuport, photographed c.1920. 'Flemish bond' construction with alternate 'headers' and 'stretchers' in each course suggest that this trench was built by the Belgians, but it has many features in common with textbook British construction. In the foreground can be seen the fire step, wooden wattle revetting, and near the top lip an elbow rest allowing the rifle muzzles to project neatly over the parapet while the firer is both rested and protected. (Private collection)

ing power were concentrated on a finite front than ever before, but without the numerical or technological resources to finish what had been started. In this equal struggle the trench was the only plausible refuge. **M**

To be continued: Part 2 will cover dugouts, posts, and concealment.

Notes

- (1) J.E. Edmonds, *Official History of the Great War, Military Operations France and Belgium*, 1933 edn., pp.430-434.
- (2) *Manual of Field Engineering*, War Office, 1911, p.6.
- (3) *Ibid* p.8.
- (4) *Ibid* p.102-5.
- (5) *Notes on Field Defences*, 1914, p.4.
- (6) E. Dane, *Trench Warfare*, London 1915, pp.10-39.
- (7) J.C. Dunn, *The War the Infantry Knew*, 1938, reprinted 1989, pp.17-21.
- (8) R. Graves, *Goodbye to All That*, 1957, edn., p.160.
- (9) A. Barrie, *The War Underground*, London 1961, p.95.
- (10) See J. Ellis, *Eye Deep in Hell*, London 1979, pp.26-42; also D. Winter, *Death's Men*, London 1978, pp.80-106.
- (11) As described by J. (later Lord) Reith, Brigade Transport Officer to 19th Brigade in *Wearing Spurs*, London 1966.
- (12) See *Military Illustrated* No.14, pp.6-14.
- (13) *Notes From the Front*, Part 3, 1915, passim.
- (14) *Fieldworks For Pioneer Battalions*, 1918, pp.12-17.
- (15) *Instructions on Wiring*, January 1918, passim.

times belts were linked by odd strands known as 'spider wire'. Broad areas covered with spider wire were difficult to detect and destroy, and though by no means impassable, they slowed and broke up enemy attacks.

The main belts were themselves of several patterns, varying from meticulously planned apron fences to 'high wire entanglements' in which pickets and guy wires were lost amidst skeins and concertinas of barbed wire. A few concealed exits allowed patrols in and out of the line. Smaller sections of wire in the form of 'knife rests' on wooden frames or 'spirals' had a special tactical function in that they could be used to block individual trenches or tracks, or even thrown out of the front line to reinforce particularly vulnerable points⁽¹⁵⁾.

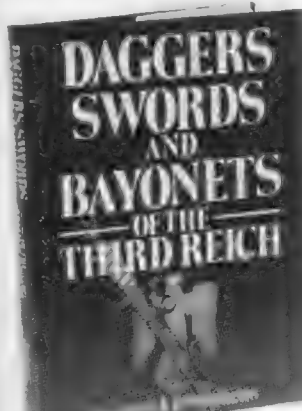
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Why trench warfare?

'The trenches' are now a universal symbol of the Western Front and of the Great War in general, but this form of stalemate was certainly not

regarded as inevitable or desirable at the time. Rather they were seen as an embarrassing temporary phenomena before a return to open warfare . . . It is remarkable that this took more than three

years to occur, but it can be explained in terms of a balance in resources – and a technological imbalance between the powers of defence and attack. In short, more men with greater kill-



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CLOSE UP

Freelance War Correspondents (1)

From the birth of the trade in the mid-19th century, the job of the combat journalist has remained essentially unchanged: to observe conflicts, and to report their observations to a curious audience far removed from the fighting. It is a line of work little understood by outsiders, whose fantasy images of such journalists — fantasies of glamour, and degradation — tend to be highly coloured. Deciding that it might be interesting to our readers to put such men in perspective, we approached two men who have been chasing wars for the past few years: Ken Guest, and Jim Hooper.

Guest, an ex-Royal Marine, has covered a wide range of conflicts throughout the Near, Middle and Far East since 1980. Hooper, a Texan, has concentrated on Africa since 1984. The two first met in the late 1970s when both were professional skydivers — Guest with the RM Freefall Parachute Display Team, and Hooper as owner of the acknowledged Mecca for sport parachutists, the Zephyrhills Parachute Center in Florida.



MI: Why did you decide to become war correspondents?

Ken Guest: It wasn't really a very conscious decision; my original intention was to get into film-making. I looked around for something I could film which they would want but couldn't do themselves, or was difficult, dangerous, expensive — and at that time Afghanistan was the answer.

My background with 45 Commando in arctic and mountain warfare lent itself to Afghanistan in the winter. It was a newsworthy story that would remain in the press for a period of time.

Jim Hooper: I'd always had an itch to write professionally, but approaching 40 was a little late to start out covering football matches or local fires. I knew I had to dive in at

Somewhere in central Bié province, Angola, Jim Hooper wears a customised camera vest built by Camera Care Systems in Bristol. Designed to carry two cameras in form-fitting, velcro-closed pockets on the chest, and various accessories and survival equipment in pockets around the bottom, it effectively distributes the load over shoulders and back. 'For long treks and fast-moving contact situations it's the best system I've ever seen for keeping all your necessary equipment close to hand.'

the deep end, doing something not many others were doing. I looked at the range of conflicts; and Africa had a number of low-intensity conflicts going on that weren't receiving much attention, where I could more or less cut my teeth. So I sold my parachuting centre, bought some cameras, and took off for Chad — convinced I'd come out with the scoop of the year

... I was incredibly naive.

MI: *In what way?*

JH: When wars aren't receiving much coverage, it's generally because no one's particularly interested in them ... Also, I was totally unprepared for the difficulty of dealing with Third World regimes. Co-operation can cost you a fortune in bribes. Chad ended up being pretty much of a non-starter, though the experience I gained was invaluable.

MI: *Which wars have you covered, between you?*

KG: Since 1980 I've done 19 trips into Afghanistan. Then there was the Lebanon, which I covered fairly extensively from 1982 through 1984, from all sides – though I spent a lot of time with the Druze up in the Shouf Mountains. I spent time on both sides of the Iran-Iraq war, but during quiet periods ... On the Iranian side we only had one mortar round come in, and my intrepid interpreter suddenly decided that Tehran was the best place to be.

I've done seven trips into Cambodia since 1985. It's been very difficult getting access because of restrictions by the Thais, and the volatile nature of the war itself. The resistance are reluctant to take people in until they're assured that the people who go are fit enough to handle the situation, and psychologically adapted to the pressures of that environment.

JH: The first real shooting I saw was in 1985 in Uganda, when President Milton Obote was overthrown by his chief-of-staff. I was actually trying to access Sudan through Uganda when it all happened. I just happened to have a visa when it all blew up, and I went in as everybody else was coming out. It was all pure luck, no design to it whatsoever, though in retrospect it was probably the most dangerous trip I've ever done.

MI: *What happened?*

JH: To begin with, I was – as we say back in the States – as dumb as dirt about Africa; and since I was hell-bent on getting my story I wouldn't listen to anyone. Everyone,



and I mean *everyone* in Kenya told me not to go in until things quietened down a bit. As you know, Uganda has a history of brutality and systematic murder that's exceptional even by African standards. Well, not far north of Kampala the truck I'd hitched a ride on was held up by a bunch of Obote's newly-dispossessed soldiers. They took everything I had – cameras, medical supplies, clothes. They were lining us up to shoot us when another vehicle came along and frightened them off. I survived it, and you can be sure I learned from it.

Since then, I've covered the Namibian bush war quite extensively; and more recently the fighting in Angola, from the Unita side.

MI: *You saw a fair amount of action in Namibia, I believe.*

JH: I was fortunate in being the first Western journalist given almost totally unrestricted access to the bush war along the Namibian-Angolan border. In the course of three trips I spent six months on operations, and had the dubious distinction of getting wounded twice.

MI: *How seriously?*

JH: The first time in the right arm by an AK, and two

months later in the left arm by mortar fragments. I had some minor nerve damage both times, but they were essentially 'designer' wounds ... totally non-life-threatening. I was pretty lucky. And my experiences in that particular war did give me the basis for my first book.

MI: *Some people see war correspondents as violence-freaks. How would you respond to that, Ken?*

KG: In my experience, most of the true professionals in this business are exactly the opposite of violence-freaks. There's a loony fringe, of course, who aren't real journalists at all. I tend to find that when things start going wrong types like that disappear fairly rapidly, and head for home with their war stories ... Professionals stay on the ground; and they aren't freaked by being around violence at all. When things are going badly wrong you have to have a sense of detachment, in order to observe what's going on around you; otherwise all you're preoccupied with is self-preservation, and you can't do the job you're there to do.

There are basically two types of war correspondents. There are those who are fun-

Angola, 1989: UNITA assault leaders listen to a briefing for the forthcoming attack on the MPLA army garrison post at Cachingues. Almost unique among African guerrilla armies, UNITA presents a competent, professional image, with well-maintained weapons and clean uniforms. Aside from the standard AK-47, this photo shows a 7.62mm PKM (left foreground), and RPG-7 with anti-personnel round (right background), and the Russian crew-served 30mm AGS-17 automatic grenade launcher. (Jim Hooper)

damentally staff crews, with all expenses paid. They stay in hotels, and cover wars that are convenient by taxi. El Salvador and Lebanon were very much like that.

Then there are those who cover wars that are difficult to access, take a long time, involve a bit of physical hardship, and are quite dangerous. Those wars aren't so popular. Now, people who try to do that who aren't used to working in that environment have a problem.

I mean, imagine going into Cambodia and suddenly deciding that you want out because things are going wrong ... in Cambodia, there *isn't* any 'out'. Once you cross the border you're committed to the entire trip. They can't afford to send anybody back with you, and

you certainly can't break off and strike out on your own. **JH:** Both Ken and I have seen the type who shows up at some rebel HQ, listens to all the briefings, does his interviews right there – and heads for home, knowing it all. When his stories appear you'd swear he was dodging shot and shell the whole time – when you know that he never heard the first round go by. That can be a little frustrating . . . but it's all part of the scene.

To be fair, most staffers do a good, straightforward, professional job – they tell the story without pretending they've done or seen something they haven't. But I remember one magazine staffer – an American – who showed up with a cocked .45 in a fast-draw holster, asking where he could find some 'gooks' to shoot. When he was offered the opportunity to go into the bush, he became most creative in finding excuses not to budge from right where he was. He spent most of his time in the bar – but you should have seen the stories he wrote.

KG: What people who don't do it can't appreciate is the amount of sheer, hard work you put into it, when all you've got at the end of the day is a few photographs. But the days – sometimes months – involved in walking around getting those photographs – the physical discomfort you have to go through to do that! Most people think we all spend our time in hotels. They don't realise that in Afghanistan or Cambodia, you're right out in the boon-docks from the very beginning. And the misconception prevails somehow, just

because you're filming and working in a violent environment, that you're in it for the violence, as opposed to the photographs.

MI: A good many of the war correspondents in Vietnam admitted to carrying weapons when accompanying troops on ops. Michael Herr, for example, who wrote the classic *Dispatches*, and scripted *Full Metal Jacket* – he admitted that he had done so more than once, and even that he'd used it. Have either of you ever carried weapons on a working trip?

JH: That's probably the most common question I'm asked. I have to say that I did so on one occasion, though it was at the insistence of the people I was with, and I regretted it from the beginning. When you're in the bush you're an observer, not a shooter. You simply can't carry a weapon and do your job, which is to take pictures.

The moral problem, as I see it, is that once you've accepted a weapon, you've essentially told the people you're with that if things come unstuck, you're going to use it; and they have every right to expect you to do just that. And if you don't, then you could be responsible for some of them getting killed,

because someone's thinking 'OK, he's over there on my flank, I don't have to worry about that side'. I thank my lucky stars that the one time I had a weapon, nothing happened.

KG: I've never carried a weapon anywhere I've been. There are pros and cons; there are some people who think it's worth doing because they could get in a situation where they'll need it to stay alive.

Personally, I feel what would probably happen is that you would use it before it was totally necessary, in a scenario which you could probably talk your way out of and make things a lot worse than they need be. Of course, there are instances where not having a weapon will get you killed. But that's the chance you take; overall, I feel better off without one. The best pictures come when the problems are the worst, and you can't take the pictures if you're using a gun.

JH: And, of course, on a different level, if you're captured with a weapon – particularly in Africa – it automatically raises the accusation of being a white mercenary. The idea of a drum-head trial and being put against a wall – or worse –

Captions to colour photographs:

(1) Young member of a Mujahideen band in Nangrahar province, Afghanistan, 1981; he is armed with an Iranian G3 and Chinese chest-webbing for the SKS. Led by a man they called 'grandfather', who was 23 years old, this band was mostly composed of 12 to 15-year-olds: recruited from peasant farmers, many of the older men had been killed before learning basic military skills. This boy's stare may be due to the Russian shellfire he survived 20 minutes before the picture was taken, near Jalalabad – or to the dope the Mujahideen smoked to calm themselves, but which in fact led to indiscriminate firing to boost their morale. The photographer moved on as soon as possible, since this wild firing was more dangerous than the Russians. (Ken Guest)

(2) Bié province, Angola, 1989; Capt. Paulo Saul of UNITA, photographed during the advance to an attack on a major government garrison. He is 34 years old, and has been fighting against Cuban, Russian and MPLA forces since 1976. Armed with a well-oiled AK-47 and a Browning 9mm pistol, he wears typical officer's bush uniform of black T-shirt and OG trousers; his 'nutria'-coloured webbing is a legacy of South African support for UNITA, now discontinued. Unself-conscious poses like this are very hard to capture unless the war correspondent manages to integrate himself into a unit so thoroughly that his presence is regarded as natural at all times. (Jim Hooper)

(3) One of hundreds of Iraqi tanks destroyed in battles round Koramshah, Iran, this T-64 reflects the fact that while tanks look large and menacing when intact and mobile, they have a shrunken and pathetic air when wrecked and abandoned. Rigidly controlled access to the front meant that most Western photographers' work was limited to static shots of Iraqi debris after an Iranian victory; by contrast, some of the photos taken by Iranian photographers in combat are epic war studies. (Ken Guest)



Namibia, 1987: SWAPOL-COIN's unique tactics, combining the massive suppressive firepower of the Casspir with the age-old tracking skills of the Ovambo constables, made it the most feared and effective unit along the Angola-Namibia border. In this photo a gunner, protected by a steel backplate, mans the pintle-mounted .30 and .50 Browning MGs, while other crew members scan the ground for signs of SWAPO insurgents. The opening up of the hull top was among many modifications made by SWAPOL-COIN. (Jim Hooper)

doesn't appeal to me. There are dozens of scenarios you could dream up where you might need a weapon; but they are so remote, so improbable, that it's better simply to carry your cameras and get on with your job of being a reporter.

MI: There are obviously much easier and safer ways of making a living. What draws you to war reporting? What's the satisfaction?

KG: Mostly, dealing with people . . . different wars, different people, different



1



2



3



Above:

The most effective counters used by SWAPO against police armoured vehicles were the RPG-7, the single-shot RPG-75 modelled on the US LAW, and the HEAT rifle grenade, any one of which could penetrate the 6mm armour with ease. The 40mm armour glass of this Wolf Turbo APC was hit by an RPG-75; the shaped charge burned through to kill the car commander standing behind the twin .30 Brownings. (Jim Hooper)

Below:

In the immediate aftermath of a SWAPO ambush which killed two policemen and wounded three, a SWAPOL-COIN car commander hit in the right arm and left hand is treated by two medics, his face betraying the shock of his wounds. The ambushing force of ten insurgents was eventually tracked down and destroyed. Although comprising only 10% of the total security force presence on the Angola-Namibia border, SWAPOL-COIN accounted for well over 80% of successful contacts with SWAPO. (Jim Hooper)



characters. Afghanistan has an entirely different feel to the Lebanon, and the Lebanon is completely different from Cambodia. They're fascinating places to work. I feel interested to watch history

happening, and even to have a walk-on part in it. You're watching events that other people only ever read about – you're actually participating, on the ground. It's interesting to find out what life is like for

the individuals involved, and why they're doing it. You're working with people who are out on the extreme edges, and that's where you get the best out of them, and the worst. But mostly the best.

JH: It's undeniable that there's a whole raft of challenges – the physical challenge, the challenge of integrating into a totally unfamiliar culture and environment, the challenge of getting the story – and often, you come back with stories that you never anticipated . . . The challenge of doing your job when everything has suddenly gone completely crazy all around you, the challenge of controlling your fear in the middle of a firefight . . . When you come out the other end having accomplished all that, there's an incredible sense of satisfaction.

And I have to add that contrary to popular opinion, it has absolutely nothing to do with courage. It's more a matter of wanting, needing to do it. I think it's just part of the individual's personality, so that immediately removes the concept of bravery. I wouldn't deny that the attention you sometimes receive is fun, and terribly ego-boosting; but if you're dead honest with yourself, you're privately a bit embarrassed by it.

MI: What would you say to someone who wanted to get into the same line of work? Would you encourage them, or try to dissuade them?

KG: Fundamentally – think about it very carefully; and learn to do the photographic side before you get thrown in at the deep end, so you can do a professional job when you get there. On the ground, in the heat of the moment, is not the time to learn how your equipment functions – that should already be second nature to you. Anything is possible; most of it's dangerous. Bear in mind that a great deal of what goes on is, in fact, extremely boring – it's not all action.

JH: Don't think you can just go off to some hot-spot and come back with the goods first time. It's like taking a

degree – there's a tremendous amount to learn. As Ken said, know your equipment. Learn how to write a basic news or feature story. You have to learn flexibility – how to adapt to new places, totally different cultures. And you have to learn a genuine respect for those cultures. When you're with a group in Africa you can't play the superior Westerner, because you're not – on the ground, the people you're with are far more sophisticated than you'll ever be in that environment.

You absolutely have to be able to relate to people. It's not always easy: there are times when very basic cultural differences can cause enormous frustration. And I'm thinking here of the relative importance of time. In the Third World, time hasn't nearly the immediacy it does in the West. They do things in their own way and their own time; you're the visitor, and it's up to you to adjust to that situation. If you can't, then stay at home.

MI: That leads to the question of how you decide what group to go in with. Is it a complicated choice?

JH: With Africa, I'd say it's pretty straightforward. The lines between one side and another are generally pretty well established; so it's a matter of picking one side and going to them and saying, 'Look, I want to do this story – will you let me?' They'll either say yes, no, or maybe. You try to convince them to make it 'yes'. Often, if you go with one side first, the opposition won't allow you in later – that's certainly been the case in Angola – so decide first which side has the better story.

KG: First, you have to assess the situation on the ground, and meet the people, and try to decide whether they're good fellows to go with, or bad fellows to go with. A number of groups have offices in the West which are readily accessible. What you'll hear in some of those offices bears absolutely no relation to the facts. Often, the people who are manning them have no idea what's



going on – but that can be the problem with the PR branch of any group you're dealing with. Their job is to promote the good side, the positive features of the group they represent. Sometimes, when you get inside, you find out there *aren't* any positive features . . .

Unfortunately, quite often the bad fellows to go with are the *only* fellows to go with, so you're stuck with whoever you get. And that's a risk you have to accept. If it's a totally unacceptable risk, then you bail out. But you tend to go along with the people who can get you to the best places, even though they aren't always necessarily the best people in terms of looking after you.

You can get well looked after, of course; but the people who look after you that well tend to be the people who will keep you well away from problems – and where the problems are, is often where the pictures are. So it's a compromise between being over-protected and under-protected. Assessing it comes with experience. In the early stages you're prone to making very bad mistakes; if you survive them, you're not going to repeat them. **M**

To be continued: In the second part of this article Ken Guest and Jim Hooper describe the best kit for a trip into a war-zone; the problems and advantages of working with other journalists; and some of their most memorable experiences.

Angola, 1989: UNITA officers who will lead a second wave of attack into Cachingues listen to heavy fighting half a mile away, and monitor radio reports from assault leaders already inside the MPLA base. After disarming a trip-wire and silently killing a sentry, a pen-

etration force of 250 UNITA troops attacked at 0530 hrs., infiltrating into Cachingues along a laterite road. Supported by 81mm mortars and a 107mm Type 63 MRL, the attackers routed a garrison of almost 800 MPLA in less than an hour. (Jim Hooper)

Captions to colour photographs overleaf:

(4) Cambodia, August 1985: a column from 215 Bn., Khmer People's National Liberation Front, commanded by Khem Sophoan, cross a river in NW Cambodia on a deep-penetration mission to blow the bridge at Ph Sala Krao on National Highway 6. Centre, carrying a 24lb. Sony Betacam video camera, is the photographer. The final approach march of 16km was entirely through water, neck-deep for the last few hundred yards. After filming the successful attack, screened by diversionary attacks on the nearby Vietnamese company position, Guest fell back with the retreating KPNLF – another 16km night march through water, much of it spent trying to keep the Bergan holding the plastic-wrapped camera dry. Day temperatures were around 120°, humidity around 98%, and there were swarms of mosquitoes. This remains Guest's most exhausting mission in ten years. (Ken Guest)

(5) Angola, 1989: some of the 200-odd civilians who acted as voluntary ammunition-bearers for a

battalion-sized UNITA force advancing to attack Cachingues, Bié province. Dr. Jonas Savimbi's movement enjoys massive and genuine support among the local population, and civil administration in UNITA-controlled areas is sensible and humane. The foreground porter carries a 107mm rocket for a Chinese-made Type 63 multiple launcher, and a traditional axe in his hand. The women behind balance clusters of 81mm mortar bombs, tied with bark strips, on their heads. (Jim Hooper)

(6) Northern Namibia, 1987: Casspir armoured personnel carrier of the SW African Police Counter-Insurgency Unit (SWAPOL-COIN) moving through thick bush in central Ovambo. Contacts with SWAPO insurgents often occurred at ranges of less than 15 metres, and ambush was a constant danger. SWAPOL-COIN operated the 11 ton Casspir in groups of four, with one Blesbok supply vehicle. Their pioneering tactical technique was to carry crews of skilled trackers, who would dismount and follow spoor on foot – at extraordinary speed – covered by the Casspir's multiple machine guns. (Jim Hooper)

(7) Member of a SADF unit being carried through a field of sorghum to the waiting Allouette III 'casevac' helicopter after being wounded by a POM-Z anti-personnel mine. SAAF pilots flying Allouettes and Pumas provided immediate support to the SADF and SWAPOL patrols throughout 53,000 square miles of Ovambo, the scene of the heaviest SWAPO infiltrations from neighbouring Angola. With reasonable luck this man will be under the hands of Army doctors within 30 minutes. (Jim Hooper)

(8) Interior of a Casspir APC on operations, demonstrating the 'maximum firepower' philosophy of SWAPOL-COIN. Pintle-mounted armament above the cab can comprise either twin .30 Brownings or 7.62mm FNs, or a .50 Browning or 20mm cannon mounted with one of the lighter machine guns; this vehicle had a .30 and a .50, plus a second .30 ball-mounted through the co-driver's windscreen. Inside, in addition to each Ovambo constable's Armscor 5.56mm R5 assault rifle with 50rd. magazine, are two captured 7.62mm Russian PKM GPMGs (foreground) and two FN GPMGs. (Jim Hooper)



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The London Trained Bands and the English Civil War (1)

KEITH ROBERTS
Painting by RICHARD HOOK

In 'MI' Nos.14 and 15 we published a detailed study of the London Trained Bands in the 16th century, and of their part in the Armada crisis of 1588. This issue sees the first part of an account tracing the story of London's militia regiments in the transitional period, and the important part they played in the early years of the Civil War.

The closing years of Queen Elizabeth's reign saw a relaxation in the Government's insistence on frequent musters of the Trained Bands. This policy continued with the accession of the pacific James I; and his action in repealing the 1558 Statutes for musters and the maintenance of arms caused some degree of confusion as to what was actually required. The decline which followed was not officially arrested until 1612, when the Government returned to the former practice of annual general musters with additional local musters for more specific training.

The interest of London's citizens had been stirred two years earlier, however, by the revival of the declining 'Society of the Artillery Garden' by enthusiasts such as Philip Hudson, Thomas Laverock, Robert Hughes and Robert Greenhurst. The Society was an association of some of the wealthier London citizens who gathered together in the 'Artillery Garden' to practise weapon-handling and drill, sometimes under professional tuition. (A direct lineage can still

be traced today between the original Society and the existing Honourable Artillery Company, a unit of the Territorial Army which retains ceremonial links with the City.)

The term 'artillery' is misleading, as the Society had nothing to do with cannon; but they did share their training ground with the Master Gunner of the Tower, hence

the name Artillery Garden which described it. At this time members of the Society were popularly known as 'London's Artillery', and as the contemporary poet Richard Niccols comments, 'by the ignorant vulgar they are generally so called, and the French word Infanterie . . . would scarce be intelligible to any common reader'. Apart from the renewed activity of the Society of the Artillery Garden, two new associations were formed in 1611: the Military Company under the patronage of Henry, Prince of Wales, in Westminster; and the Martial Yard in Southwark.

Members of the Society traditionally provided officers for the London Trained Bands, and its method of training – where 'each man, by turn, bore

office, from the Corporal to the Captain' – ensured their capacity to fill these rôles. Some serious attention to the Trained Bands was needed after years of neglect. After a muster ordered in 1614 the King's Privy Council commented: 'We are informed that such hath been the decay of Arms and Furniture in these times of peace and since His Majesty's happy Government, as there was not furniture sufficient in private mens custody or in the halls of Companies, or what otherwise could be found, to arm six thousand men in such manner as is requisite.'

Musters held in the following two years showed that the citizens' enthusiasm had increased and their equipment had improved, but their officers still had a lot of work to do on their training and organisation. Richard Niccols commented on the men's appearance, noting that 'the soldiers, for their arms and furniture, both for service and show, were well and rightly appointed, imitating the old Romans in their garb of feathers, which is a sight brave and terrible to the enemy, so it is goodly and delightful to friends' – but added, 'I noted these two defects, ignorance of order and neglect of their Captain's command'.

THE VOLUNTARY ASSOCIATIONS IN LONDON

Despite problems in training there was still a great deal of popular enthusiasm in London for amateur military exercises and displays. The Society of the Artillery Garden formed a model which was copied in the provinces, and many country gentlemen came to the Artillery Garden to train with members of the Society, taking back to their counties something of what they had learnt. Sometimes these country enthusiasts formed associations in emulation of the London Societies, examples of these being formed in Colchester (1621), Bury St. Edmunds (1622), Bristol (1625), Great Yarmouth (1626), Chester



William Barriffe: a woodcut from the 1639 edition of his *Military Discipline, or the Young Artilleryman* – the most popular drill book of the Civil War. Barriffe, a leading military theorist of the Society of the Artillery Garden, served in the London Trained Bands and joined John Hamden's regiment of the Parliamentary army at the outbreak of war. (Author's collection)

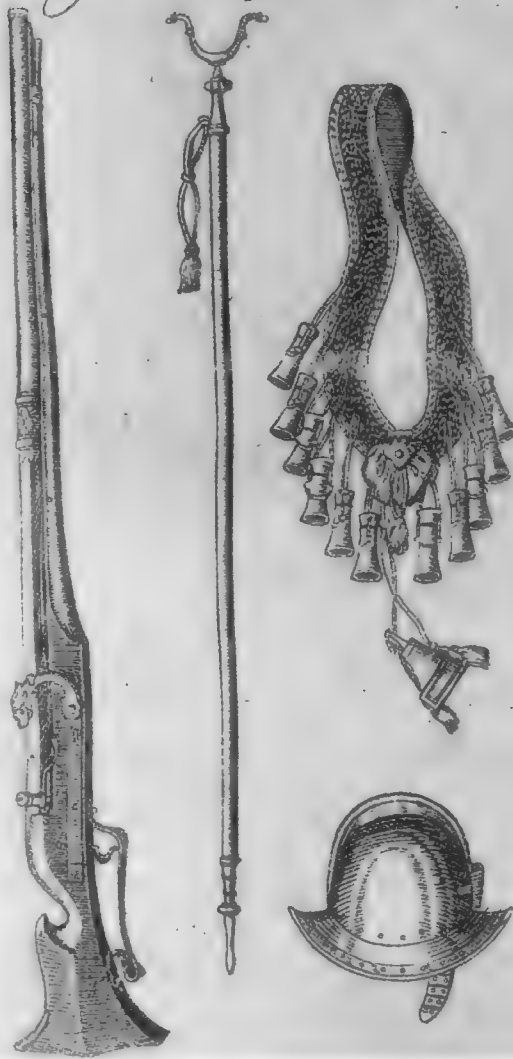
The armes of y^e Musketeer

(1626), Ipswich (1629) and Nottingham (1629).

Some of these new associations prospered, such as the Artillery Yard of Great Yarmouth; others declined after a few years; but all looked to London for their inspiration. As a result of these activities London became a centre for discussion and experiment in the military arts; and the number of enthusiasts provided a ready market for books and pamphlets on the subject, whether the work of amateurs, of professional English mercenary officers, or translations of foreign authors.

Apart from the large associations of the Artillery Garden, the Military Company in Westminster and the Martial Yard in Southwark, there were also a number of smaller groups in and around London, such as the 'Loving Gentlemen of Town-Ditch' and the 'Gentlemen of the Private and Loving Company of Cripplegate'. The latter, which was organised by the Trained Band Captains Edward Ditchfield and

Henry Saunders, took their training to extremes — although William Barriffe in his comments on their activities in 1635 said that as their weekly meetings took place between six and seven o'clock in the morning during the summer these 'provide no hindrance to men's more necessary callings, but rather call them earlier to their business affairs'. At these meetings the Cripple-gate enthusiasts 'neither beat Drumme, display Ensigne, nor discharge Musket; but only exercise their Postures, Motions and formes of Battell, with false fire in their pannes' — a concession which



Musketeer equipment, from the drill manual *The Tactics of Aelian* (1616) by John Bingham. Bingham was a leading member of the Society of the Artillery Garden and held the post of captain between 1619 and 1627. His book was a commentary on the classical art of war and its relevance to 'modern warfare'. (Author's collection)

Pikeman's equipment, from *The Tactics of Aelian* (1616). (Author's collection)



The



Gorget

The



Helmet

The



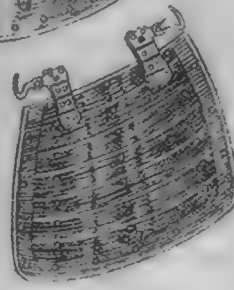
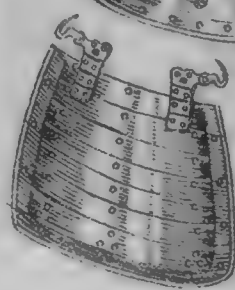
Breast

The



Back

The



Tasset

The Pike



Richard Hook's colour reconstructions opposite show (1 & 2) a Trained Band Musketeer and Pikeman of c.1642. These figures are based on statuettes from the staircase at Cromwell House in Highgate, copies of which can be seen in the National Army Museum. They were commissioned by a military enthusiast, Richard Sprignell, in the late 1630s, and depict soldiers and officers of the Trained Bands in contemporary costume. The sculptor used drill 'Postures' from the classic drill manual *The Exercise of Arms* by Jacob de Gheyn for the poses of the musketeer and pikeman figures, a reflection of his employer's obsession with precise drill.

The soldiers illustrated are substantial citizens, who might send a substitute for a campaign outside the City but choose to serve in person within it, partly from a sense of social responsibility and partly to save the wages of a substitute. The equipment itself had to fulfill statutory requirements, but much of it was old-fashioned, such as the heavy-pattern matchlock musket which the musketeer carries

and the cross-hilted swords worn by both. They wear their own civilian clothes as there was no obligation to provide a uniform.

The musketeer illustrated stands in the 'Saluting Posture', and carries most of the standard equipment. This was set at 'a good Musket (the Barrel of 4 foot long, the Bore of 12 bullets in the pound rowling in), a Rest, Banelier, Head-piece, a good sword, Girdle and Hangers'; but this soldier wears a broad-brimmed hat in place of the helmet, a substitution made by most English musketeers at the time. He also wears an extra item of equipment – the short buff coat which contemporary sources associate with London musketeers as 'Trained Band Buffe'.

The pikeman stands in the 'Order Posture', and carries all of the required equipment: 'a Pike seventeen foot long head and all; (the diameter of the staff to be one inch, the head to be well-steeled, 8 inches long, broad, strong and sword pointed; the cheeks 2 foot long, well-riveted; the butt-end bound with a ring of iron), Gorget, Back, Breast, Tassets and Head-piece, a good sword of three foot long, cut-

ting and stiff-pointed, with Girdle and Hangers'. Instead of a separate belt this soldier hangs his sword from the belt which fastens his armour at the waist.

(3) Auxiliary musketeer, Abingdon Garrison, 1645.

Six Auxiliary regiments were raised in London in 1643 to relieve the Trained Bands of guard duty in the City. The promise that they would not have to serve outside London and its environs was soon broken, and every regiment was out on campaign the following year. Three regiments – the Red, White and Blue Auxiliaries – were sent to Abingdon in 1644, and found the service at this exposed garrison so arduous that their numbers were soon decimated by desertion and sickness. So serious was the desertion rate that the garrison commander, Maj.Gen. Richard Browne, was instructed by Parliament to issue the new uniforms they sent him only to those 'whom you can have some assurance that they intend to tarry there the Winter and do service and not to depart when they are re-furnished'. By mid-January 1645 the three

Auxiliary regiments in the garrison were reduced into one composite regiment under Col. George Payne. A Royalist spy's report of the following year records only 250 men remaining as 'Colonel Payne's Bluecoats'. It is uncertain whether the Auxiliaries were uniformed when they were first raised, but the composite regiment was evidently re-equipped with uniform clothing by Parliament, perhaps from the consignment delivered to the garrison in December 1644.

The soldier illustrated shows the effect of hard service on his clothing and provides a marked contrast with the appearance of his Trained Band colleagues. Despite the conditions which have caused so many of his fellows to desert, he still adopts the correct firing posture taught by the Trained Band officers who held command in Auxiliary regiments. He wears a blue uniform coat over his civilian clothing, and carries a new lighter-pattern musket. This can be fired without the support of a musket-rest, which he has thrown away. Apart from this his equipment is the same as that of the Trained Band musketeer.



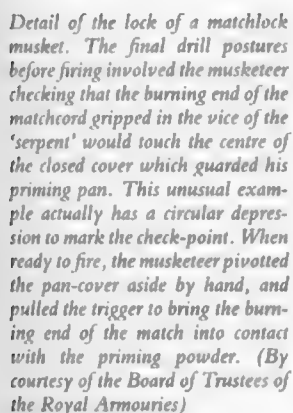
So Standing the Musket in the Rest ballanced, he may gouverne y^e same with y^e left hand onely and so free y^e right hand as this figure sheweth.



must have been appreciated by their neighbours at that time in the morning.

This is not to say that all was sweetness and light within the associations, and political in-fighting could, on occasion, severely damage their morale. One example was the dispute between Captain Edward Panton and Captain John Bingham over the post of Captain of the Artillery Garden which coincided with, and probably caused, a significant reduction in the number of members in the early 1620s. William Barriffe was one of several junior members of the Society of the Artillery Garden who were leading exponents of the English style of drill, and his work, in particular, was

Two examples of musketeers in the drill position called 'Saluting Posture'. The first is from an English manual printed in 1623; the second is a statuette from Cromwell House, Highgate, c.1638. Both stand in the classic stance first illustrated by Jacob de Gheyn and then copied as the perfect standard throughout Western Europe. (By courtesy of the Boards of Trustees of the British Library and the Royal Armouries)



Right:
A page from William Barriffe's *Military Discipline* . . . (1657 edition), showing the method of 'Facing Square' for a mixed unit of pikemen and musketeers – a form of defence against cavalry. (Author's collection)

much respected and added to the repute of the Society. Even so he felt that nepotism and favouritism were still rife in the selection of officers for the Trained Bands in the 1630s. This can be seen in a number of sarcastic asides in his book *Military Discipline or the Young Artilleryman*, such as his suggestion that the soldiers' attitude to drill would improve if their captain turned up on occasion to watch. Some of the verse he included in his book continues this theme, the extract below being an example:

Some burthened are with more
 Command than skill,
 Which had they power suting to
 their mind,
 You then should see reason
 intrall'd to will,
 Nor any bove their knowledge
 should you find;
 For rather then they'l study to
 learn better,
 They wish all wanting, none to
 know a letter.

So be there many Officers in
Bands,
That neither knew themselves,
nor care for those
That skilfull are in Postures,
and Commands
Nor are they careful
which end foremost goes.
They thinke, to dice, to drab, to
swear, and swill,
Is skill enough for them, learn
more that will.

And if that any man more forward be,
For to instruct the Souldier (as is fit)
With such a fellow they cannot agree,
He is vaine-glorious, strives to shew his wit;
They will be sure to quarrell and deprave him,
And in their cups perhaps they'll
(etc.)

Barriffe's frustrations will strike a sympathetic chord with members of some of today's voluntary military-interest groups.

Despite these internal problems the voluntary associations had a very positive impact on the Trained Bands of London and the suburbs; and it was their efforts which made these regiments so effective during the Civil War, while other Trained Bands – with the exception of the Cornish – had little impact. Unfortunately for King Charles, the efforts of his Privy Council in fostering the development of an 'Exact Militia' and supporting the activities of the voluntary associations created an effective military force which ended by fighting against him, and were certainly a crucial factor in his defeat.

Some Royalists thought,

CHAP. X.
Of Facing square, and how to perform it; the usefulness of Facing, and the several parts thereof.

When we instruct our Soldiers how to face square, (if the Body be but 8. deep) command the two first Ranks stand fast, the two last Ranks face about, the rest of the Body face to the right and left. If the Body be deeper, we command more Ranks to the Front, and so likewise to the Rear. It will be very necessary for young Soldiers to move 6. or 12. paces upon every motion of Facing, whether they are entire or divisional. I will now prick two several figures of facing, which will be sufficient to demonstrate all the rest.

The Command is, Face square and March.
The Direction is, Two first Ranks stand.
Two last Ranks face about.
The rest of the Body, face to the right and left.
(then) March all.

Proper Front.

	C.	
M M M M P P P P P F M M M		
M M M M P P P P P F M M M		
M M M M P P P P . . . P P P P M M M M M M		Front Accidental.
M M M M P P P P . . . P P P P M M M M M M	S. E. S. E.	
M M M M P P P P . . . P P P P M M M M M M		
M M M M d d d d d d d d W W W W W W		
M M M M d d d d d d d d W W W W W W	L.	

The Front of the Retreat.

When your Soldiers begin any motion let them advance their Pikes, and consider their Muskets. When they come to a stand (& have performed their direction) let them erect their Armes, that is, to rest their Muskets, and order their Pikes.

To reduce them to their first order.

Face all about to the Right, March and close your divisions.
Face all to your Leader, (who then stands at his Front-proper;) &c.
Facing square, another way, and Marching upon it.

The Command is, Face square, and March.
The Direction is, Musquetiers face to the right and left.
(Next) Half-files of Pikes, face about to the right.
(Last) March all.

with hindsight, that this was all the result of devious planning on the part of Puritan extremists who deliberately infiltrated the associations. The Royalist newsbook *Mercurius Civicus* printed a letter in August 1643 which expressed this point of view: 'You may remember when the Puritans here did as much abominate the Military-Yard or Artillery-Garden, as Paris-Garden itself: they would not mingle with the Prophane: but at last when it was instill'd into them, that the blessed Reformation

blessed Reformation intended could not be effected but by the Sword, these places were instantly filled with few or none but men of that Faction.' The letter goes on to comment: 'But after a while they began to affect, yea and Compasse, the chief Officers of Command, so that when any prime Commanders dyed, new men were elected, wholly devoted to that Faction: And

it became a Generall Emulation amongst them who should buy the most, and the best Armes'.

This is overstating the case somewhat, since much of the interest in military exercises at the time resulted from news of the wars in Europe, and English Protestants had a natural concern in a struggle between Protestants and Catholics, particularly Habsburg Catholics. It is not all that far fetched, however, because opposition to the king was very highly organised in London, as several petitioning movements at the time show; and it was already obvious that in a country without a standing army the control of the Militia, and particularly the appointment of their officers, was crucial.

To be continued: Part 2 of this article will describe the immediate pre-Civil War period, and the part played in the War by the Trained Bands.

Redcoat:

The Regimental Coat of the British Infantryman, c1808-15 (3)

GLENN A. STEPLER

Perhaps the most distinctive feature of the British infantryman's coat was its regimental lace, or 'looping'. Such 'looping' had first appeared in the British service in the late 17th century as a distinction on Grenadier dress, and was to disappear from general use only in the mid-19th century. Its last vestiges are still to be seen today on the uniforms of the Brigade of Guards, on tunic skirts and cuff flaps.

In the early 19th century the lace was woven with various coloured stripes and 'worms' of regimental pattern, and was used not only as an edging to the collar, shoulder straps, wings and turnbacks, but also as 'loops' formed as an ornament at buttons and buttonholes. It was used further to decorate the rear of the coat, between

the hip buttons. Regiments were distinguished not only by the pattern of their lace, but also by the shape into which the 'loops' were

formed; and by whether the loops and buttons were set on 'regular' (i.e. single or evenly spaced), or in pairs, or in threes (as were those of the 3rd Regiment of Foot Guards).

LOOP SHAPES AND PLACING

Modern convention has assigned only three shapes into which the 'loops' were formed: square-ended, pointed and bastion. In fact, however, early 19th century practice recognised at least five shapes, and it is possible that there were even more. The 'bastion' loops were of two sorts: 'Flowerpot' and 'Jew's Harp'. The pointed loops included a common 'straight point' and a rarer

'Coldstream' loop. There may also have been another variation to the pointed loop, folded in a manner ascribed later in the 19th century to the 93rd Regiment of Foot⁽¹⁾. The square-ended loops were also referred to as 'double-headed' loops.

When the existing clothing regulations were reviewed in 1802 it was noted that the infantry were to use ten loops on each side of the front of the

Light Company, unidentified regiment; coat (3); Musée Royal de l'Armée, Bruxelles. The nine 'flowerpot' loops down each side of the chest well illustrate the problem of fitting bastion-style loops onto regimental coats. The regulation ten, described in 1802, was simply too many, especially for the shorter coat of later years, and the notes of the Pearce firm make consistent reference to only nine. Where bastion-style loops were to be set on in pairs the Clothing Board allowed eight, which number was also sanctioned in 1802 for the 'jackets' of Highland regiments.

The coat has yellow facings, and its lace is described as having a blue or black stripe. The wings are decorated with thick green tufting. It has not yet been possible to identify the buttons, though they are all 'small', as is correct for Light Infantry clothing. Possibly it is an Irish Militia coat.

Intriguingly, the National Army Museum has a photo of this coat which identifies it as being from the Coldstream Guards. Can there in fact be any possible association? The provenance of the coat is not clear, but it is said to have once been in the museum which Cotton set up at Waterloo. In the latter years of the Napoleonic wars many regular regiments received militiamen as drafts, taking them directly into their ranks still wearing clothing provided by their original regiments. Such clothing was worn until replaced in the next annual clothing of their new regiment. Men who had been clothed by the Militia were indeed serving in the Coldstream in Flanders in early 1815. All of the Coldstream were reported to have their coats in a very poor state and many men had their coats patched, 'particularly those who were last clothed by the Militia'. The Coldstream did not receive their new clothing for 1815 until after Waterloo. Is there a possibility that this coat was actually worn by a militiaman serving in the Coldstream in 1814/15—perhaps even at Waterloo? Unfortunately it has not been possible to examine the coat for other clues.



Right:

'Mess.' J. N. & B. Pearse', Records Book, c. 1803-1819. Typical entries giving details for privates' coats of the 7th and 9th Regiments of Foot, with samples of their regimental lace. This is a unique source for the study of early 19th century uniform, but one constrained by poor writing, idiosyncratic abbreviations and later alterations which make many entries difficult to decipher, or to date precisely. (Canadian War Museum)



Above:

Grenadier and Light Company privates of the 29th (Worcestershire) Regiment, after Charles Hamilton Smith, 1813. While both are shown with pointed loops, those on the Grenadier (left) appear to be set on evenly ('regular') while those of his companion are conceivably in pairs. In his schemata tables (*Costume of the Army*, London, 1815), Hamilton Smith indicates square ('double-headed') loops set in pairs; but De Bosset (1803) shows pointed loops in pairs. On the better evidence of Pearse's notations, De Bosset would appear to be correct: pointed loops in pairs. Pearse also includes a sample of the lace, which again conforms exactly to De Bosset.

The coats have been left unbuttoned at the top to expose the shirt frill. (Photo courtesy P. J. Haythornthwaite)

coat, with a further four on each cuff and on each pocket flap. Highland regiments wore jackets, and were to have only eight loops down each side of the front and three on each pocket flap.

Alone, the 3rd Foot Guards had nine loops, set in threes, on each side of the front, and three on each cuff and pocket flap. In practice, however, the number of loops appearing on the breast of the coat varied with the shape of the loop being used, and might be further altered in respect of the size of the man or boy being clothed.

Whereas the square (or 'double-headed') loops and the pointed varieties presented tailors with little problem, the bastion-style loops were distinctly awkward. They required more space, and when set on 'regular' the custom was to use only nine loops (instead of the prescribed ten) on each side of the front. In addition it was 'well known that the Reg^{ts} which wear their Loops by two's and are made Bastion Button holes, cannot possibly have more than Eight on

the Breast, unless upon a very large sized Coat, and then it is too much crowded'⁽²⁾. The difficulty was brought to the attention of the Clothing Board, and in January 1809 it was decided to grant permission 'to Regiments having the Bastion Loop to wear eight Button Holes provided the Lace is put on by Two's; but in no other Instance'⁽³⁾.

In 1802 it was also noted that the coats and jackets of corporals and private soldiers were 'to be exactly similar . . . in setting on the Lace, Buttons, Shldr. Straps, & Pocket Flaps . . . as . . . described for the Sergeants of their respective Reg.^{ts} or Corps'. This indeed seems to have been the usual practice (though a narrower white 'braid' was used on sergeants' coats), but there were exceptions. In the 22nd Regiment of Foot the coats of the private men were made with eight Jew's Harp loops set in pairs, but those of their sergeants were made with five pairs of square-ended loops⁽⁴⁾.

Buttons

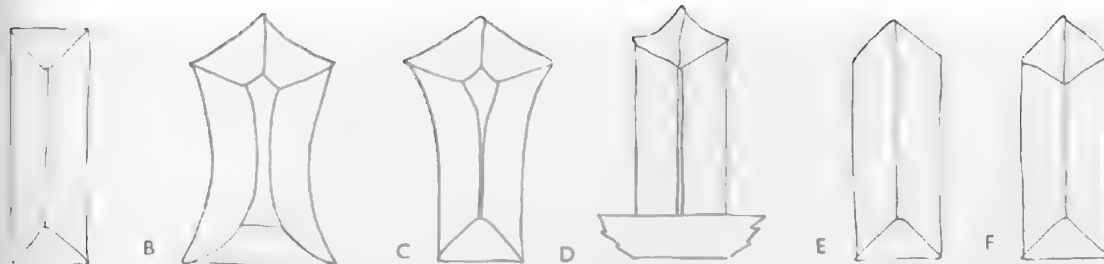
The buttons, apart from being themselves distinctively marked to each regiment, were used to make a further distinction between regiments and companies, depending on the size and the number of buttons used. Battalion and Grenadier company coats were adorned with both 'coat' and 'breast' buttons, the former being used on the cuffs, pocket flaps and hips, the smaller 'breast' buttons appearing down the front of the coat, on the shoulder straps and frequently as a closure on the pocket flap. The number of large buttons used on such

coats seems to have been 18; but the exact number of small buttons depended not only on the number of chest loops, but also on whether or not the coat was made with a button with which the soldier could close his pocket. The number of small 'breast' buttons thus varied from ten to fourteen⁽⁵⁾.

The jackets of the Light Infantry companies and of the Light Infantry regiments – and also of the 5/60th and the 95th (Rifle) Regiment – were embellished only with small buttons, the usual number being 30 (and 44 on 'rifle jackets'). Evidence on the 43rd Regiment of Foot shows that prior to its conversion to Light Infantry in 1803, the Battalion and Grenadier coats of the regiment had required a total of 32 buttons (18 coat and 14 breast); but the regiment's new Light Infantry 'jackets' needed only 30 (all breast buttons), on account of the pockets being sloped diagonally and the opening into the pockets being moved to the pleats, where no button was used to close them. The Battalion and Grenadier companies of Highland regiments, although wearing 'jackets', seem to have had a conventional combination of both coat and breast buttons⁽⁶⁾.

'Mess.' J. N. & B. Pearse'

Reconstructions of the soldier's coat worn during the Napoleonic period have had to rely heavily on the information supplied in schematic form by Charles Philip de Bosset's *A View of the British Army . . . 1803* and Charles Hamilton Smith's *Costume of the Army . . . according to the Last Regulations*, 1814. Neither, however, tells us everything. Although unnoticed in modern uniform studies which use De Bosset's work as a reference, De Bosset was in fact careful to distinguish between those bastion loops which were 'Jew's Harp' and those which were 'Flowerpot'. Hamilton Smith was less so, and frequently his bastion shapes are indistinct. Some of the differences in detail between De



Bosset and Hamilton Smith can certainly be explained by changes which were made after 1803 in the lace patterns and loop shapes of some regiments; but confidence in both these sources, especially in Hamilton Smith, can be shaken by discrepancies in the original colouring (done by hand) between one version and another. Some of the resulting problems can now be resolved by evidence from an early 19th century records book associated with the London clothiers 'Mess.^{rs} J. N. & B. Pearse'.

The acquisition about ten years ago of several Pearse items by the Canadian War Museum is of no small importance, for during the Napoleonic Wars Pearse was a principal supplier of regimental clothing. The Pearse family had a long association with the military clothing trade; and in the early 1800s, as evidenced by their records book, supplied clothing at one time or another to over 70 different regiments of the Line. In addition they supplied Militia clothing, and that of various of Britain's 'foreign corps'. Their importance is further indicated by the fact that in 1814 all of the standard patterns held by the army's Inspectors of Clothing, for infantry coats and jackets, were supplied by Pearse⁽⁷⁾.

The Pearse book is an important find, but it is not without its difficulties and limitations. It was very much a 'working' record and consequently there are numerous alterations, rubbings-out and new entries. Not all is legible, and much is in a very cursory note form. The precise dating of many entries is uncertain. The paper is watermarked to '1803' and internal evidence suggests that the book was probably begun early that year. Most of the entries date

between 1803 and 1817 or 1819, and a few towards the end were added as late as 1840⁽⁸⁾. The book was used principally to record the amounts of regimental lace and the number of buttons needed for each coat or jacket, but includes other incidental notations as well. Samples of many of the laces

were glued to the pages, but sadly many are now missing. As entries were changed from time to time, there are often several different ones for the same regiment. Some are extremely sparse on detail; the most useful are summarised here in tabular form.

While the Pearse records add a great deal of new infor-

Left:

Loop shapes: (A) 'Double-headed' or 'square'. (B) 'Jew's Harp'. (C) 'Flowerpot'. (D) 'Coldstream'. (E) 'Straight Point'. (F) Pointed (a type of folded point later ascribed by Pearse to the 93rd Regiment). Britain's early 19th century military clothing trade recognised at least five loop shapes for infantry coats, and possibly more. The bastion-style loops were of two sorts, 'Flowerpot' and 'Jew's Harp', while the pointed loops included a common 'straight point' and a 'Coldstream' loop, and possibly another variation folded in a manner noted by Pearse, c.1840s, for the 93rd Regiment. The Pearse notes of c.1803-1819 indicate a 'Coldstream' loop for the 93rd. The 'Coldstream' loop shown here is taken from a surviving coat of the Coldstream Guards, c.1790.

Matching the terminology used in Pearse's records to the actual loop shapes is not straightforward, and has been deduced from internal evidence from Pearse and by a comparison of the Pearse notes with De Bosset. Just to confuse matters, however, there is also other early 19th century evidence which indicates that some in the military clothing trade may have switched the terms 'Flowerpot' and 'Jew's Harp' as given here! The labelling used here, however, does seem to be what Pearse meant by these two terms.

As in all other aspects of the making of the soldier's coat, there was always variation due to hand working, poor workmanship, etc., and the neatness of the results in the folding and sewing of the lace was no exception. It was common, upon receiving the year's clothing from the clothier, to have the lace completely resewn by the regimental tailors.

Bottom:

Battalion Company, 83rd Regiment; coat (6); Musée de l'Armée, Les Invalides, Paris. An excellent view of a Battalion Company 'Cross Pocket Flap' with a small functional button as a closure. As in coat (7) - Grenadier, 87th Regiment - access to the real pocket is from the top of the pocket flap. Note also the diagonal forward slant given to the two loops nearest the turnback. Unfortunately Pearse's notations on the 83rd Regiment are very scant, mentioning only that there were ten 'double-headed' loops in pairs, the lace to be set on with the 'Green Edge in'. All of these details are seen in both surviving coats of the 83rd, nos. (5) and (6). The facings are yellow; the lace has one red and one green stripe. (Musée de l'Armée, photo courtesy Martin Windrow)



mation on the details of the soldier's coat, they also point very clearly to the fact that there remains much which is unknown. This is certainly

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Left:

Grenadier Company, 87th (The Prince of Wales's Own Irish) Regiment; coat (7) in the sequence adopted in Part 1 of this series, 'M1' No.20; RIF Museum, Armagh. Prior to 1811 the regiment's title was without the word 'Own'. The coat is of special interest, being both an example of a Grenadier's and also one having pointed loops. Pearse made coats for the 87th Regiment, but not necessarily this one. The coat has the usual 18 large buttons, but only 12 small. Notations on the 87th are entered three times in the Pearse records – the first two include 14 small buttons, and what appears to be the last entry mentions only twelve, but this final entry is entirely struck out. The lining of the survivor is stamped with what appears to be a maker's name, but it has not been possible to decipher it. (Royal Irish Fusiliers Museum)

Right:

The wings conform to the 1802 requirements for Grenadiers, being of red cloth with '6 Darts of Lace on Each' with 'a Row of Lace on the Bottom'. In cut they are of a more oval shape and much fuller than the common Light Infantry wing. As they are, the wings are without any of the additional fringe so popular with many other regiments – though possibly the tailors of the 87th would have intended to add it

themselves? The small shoulder strap buttons, apparently contemporary, are quite unlike those used elsewhere on the coat. Unfortunately it has not been possible to identify them

Above right:

Grenadier coats, like those of the Battalion Companies, had 'Cross Pocket Flaps', adorned with four large 'coat' buttons, each with a loop of the regimental lace. The diagonal slant given to the pair of loops nearest the 'turnback' is also seen on the surviving coats of the 83rd Regiment, (5) and (6) in our sequence. The buttons bear an arabic '87' surmounted by a harp, over which appears the plumed device of the Prince of Wales.

An opening along the top edge of the pocket flap admitted the hand into the real pocket, but is without any small functional button to close it. The Pearse notes, calling for 14 small buttons, presumably included two which were to be used for closing the pocket flaps, as on the coats of the 83rd Regiment – (5) and (6); that of the 9th Regiment – (1); and one of the 26th Regiment coats (2).

Above left:

The cuffs bear the usual four large 'coat' buttons, each with a loop of regimental lace, formed here into a common 'straight point', the lace being set on with the 'red edge out' as per Pearse's notes.

Privates' Coats: Notations from 'Messrs. J. N. & B. Pearse', c. 1803-1819

Regt	Facings (a)	Lace Sample (b)	Yards of Looping	Type (c)	Loops No. (d)	Spacing (e)	Buttons Large Small		Sergeant's Coat (f)	Other notes (g)
1st	-	-	-	-	9	R	-	-	-	-
2nd	-	-	-	-	10	R	-	-	'Broad Bread for serjeant'	-
3rd	'Buff'	One narrow black stripe between one red and one yellow stripe, all together and to one side, red stripe near edge	12	DH	10	T	18	12	Same as private	-
4th	'Blue'	Narrow blue stripe along one edge	13	FP	9	R	18	13(11)	Same as private	'Blue edge of lace in'
5th	'Olive drab'	Missing	14	JH	9	R	18	11	Same as private	-
6th	'Yellow'	One red stripe near one edge and one pale yellow stripe near other edge	12	DH	10	T	18	12	Same as private	'Red edge of lace out'
7th	'Blue'	Blue stripe near one edge	12	DH	10	R	18	12	Same as private	'Blue edge of lace out'
8th	-	-	-	DH	10	R	-	-	Same as private	'Yellow edge out'
9th	'Lemon'	One black stripe near each edge	12	DH	10	T	18	12	Same as private	-
12th	'Lemon'	Missing	12	JH	8	T	18	10	-	-
13th	-	-	12	-	10	T	18	14	-	-
	-	-	-	JH	8	T	18	10	Same as private	-
14th	'White'	Narrow pale yellowish-buff stripe near one edge with a blue/red worm near other edge	12	DH	10	T	18	12	Same as private	'Broad edge of lace out'
15th	-	-	-	DH	10	T	-	-	Same as private	'as 34 lace'
16th	'Yellow'	Dark red stripe near one edge	12	DH	10	R	18	12	Same as private	'red edge of lace out'
17th	'White'	One yellow stripe between two black stripes, all together and to one side near edge	12	DH	10	T	18	12	Same as private	'Broad edge of Lace out'
20th	-	-	12	-	-	-	18	14	-	-
21st	'Blue'	One blue stripe along one edge	12	DH	10	T	18	12	Same as private	'Blue edge of lace in'
22nd	'Buff'	-	12	JH	8	T	18	10	'10 loops by Twos, Dbl. Hd.'	-
23rd	-	-	-	JH	9	R	-	-	Same as private	-
24th	-	-	12	-	-	-	18	14	-	-
25th	'Blue'	One wormed blue stripe in centre	12(14)	FP(JH)	9	-	18	13(10)	Same as private	-
26th	-	-	12	-	-	-	18	14	-	-
28th	-	One yellow stripe in centre, and one black stripe near each edge	-	DH	10	T	-	-	-	-
29th	'Yellow'	One yellow stripe along each edge with a black stripe running beside it	12	Ptd	10	T	18	12	Same as private	-
32rd	'White'	Missing	12	DH	10	T	18	14	Same as private	'narrow edge of lace in'
33rd	-	One red stripe in centre	-	JH	8	T	18	10	-	'Loops revert on cuffs flaps white shoulder strap'
34th	'Yellow'	One wormed scarlet stripe near one edge, and one blue/yellow worm near the other	12	DH	10	T	18	12	Same as private	'red stripe of lace in'
37th	'Yellow'	One broad scarlet stripe near one edge, with a broad yellow stripe next to it.	12	DH	10	T	18	14	Same as private	'red edge of Lace out'
38th	'Yellow'	One scarlet stripe near each edge and one yellow stripe in centre.	14	JH	9	R	18	14	Same as private	-
39th	'Green'	Missing	12	DH	10	T	18	14	Same as private	'green edge of lace out'
41st	-	One wormed black stripe in centre	-	JH	9	R	18	11	Same as private	-
42nd	-	One broad scarlet stripe near one edge	12	JH	8	R	18	10	'Serjt. same except turnback lac'd on Blue cloth and Silk Bread'	'red edge out'
43rd	'White'	One black stripe near one edge and one scarlet stripe near the other edge	12	DH	10	T	18(X)	14(30)	Same as private	-
44th	'Yellow'	Missing	12	DH	10	R	18	14	Same as private	-
46th	-	One red and one dark blue stripe set together in centre	-	DH	10	T	-	-	-	'Black edge in'
47th	-	-	-	DH	10	T	-	-	Same as private	-
48th	-	-	-	DH	10	T	-	-	Same as private	'Black edge in'
49th	-	-	-	FP	9	R	-	-	-	-
50th	'Black'	One scarlet stripe in centre	12	DH	10	T	18	14	Same as private	-
51st	-	-	14	-	-	-	18	14	-	-
	'Green'	Missing	14	Coldsm.	10	T	-	30	Same as private	'Green edge of lace out'
52nd	-	-	15	-	-	-	-	30	-	'Privates Jacket'
53rd	-	One scarlet stripe in centre	12	DH	10	T	18	12	Same as private	-
54th	'Olive drab'	Missing	12	DH	10	T	18	14	Same as private	-

Regt	Facings (a)	Lace Sample (b)	Yards of Looping	Type (c)	Loops No. (d)	Spacing (e)	Buttons Large Small		Sergeant's Coat (f)	Other notes (g)
55th	-	-	-	DH	10	I	-	-	Same as private	
56th	'Blue'	Missing	12	DH	10	I	18	12	Same as private	-
58th	-	-	12	-	-	-	18	14	-	-
	-	-	-	DH	10	R	-	-	-	-
60th	'Blue'	Missing	12	DH	10	I	18	12	Same as private	'Broad edge out' 'New regulation'
5/60th	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	44	-	'Rifle Jacket'
	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	44	-	'Red cuff and collar'
61st	'Salmon Coulered'	One blue stripe near one edge	12	DH	10	R	18	14	Same as private	'Blue edge out'
62nd	-	-	12	-	-	-	18	14	-	-
64th	'Black'	One red stripe near one edge, and one black stripe near the other edge	12	DH	10	T	18	14	-	'red edge in'
65th	-	-	12	-	-	-	18	14	-	-
	-	One black stripe near each edge	-	JH	9	R	-	-	Same as private	-
66th	'Olive drab'	Missing	12	DH	10	R	18	14	Same as private	-
	'Olive'	-	12	DH	10	R	18	12	Same as private	'narrow edge in'
68th	'Green'	Missing	12	DH	10	T	18	14	Same as private	'Private Coat altered to Jacket' 'yellow edge in'
69th	'Green'	One green stripe in centre and one scarlet stripe along each edge	12	DH	10	T	18	14	Same as private	
70th	'Black'	One black stripe in centre	12	DH	10	R	18	14(12)	Same as private	
71st	-	-	12	-	-	-	-	30	-	'Privates Jacket'
72nd	-	-	14	-	-	-	18	14	-	-
	'Yellow'	One green stripe near one edge	13	JH	9	R	18	11	Same as private	'Green edge out'
74th	'White'	One scarlet stripe set off centre	12	DH	10	R	18	14	Same as private	'red edge out'
77th	'Yellow'	One red stripe near one edge, and one black stripe and one yellow stripe set together near the other edge, the black to the outside	12	DH	10	R	18	14	Same as private	'sky blue edge in'
78th	-	-	14	-	-	-	18	14	-	'Jacket'
	-	-	-	FP	9	R	-	-	Same as private	
80th	-	-	12	Ptd	10	I	18	14	-	-
	'Yellow'	One red stripe in centre, and one black stripe along each edge	-	Ptd	10	T	18	12	Same as private	-
83rd	-	-	-	DH	10	T	-	-	-	'Green edge in'
85th	'Yellow'	Missing	12	DH	10	I	18	14	Same as private	-
87th	'Green'	Missing	12	Ptd	10	I	18	14	Same as private	'red edge out'
	-	-	12(X)	Ptd(X)	10(X)	I(X)	18(X)	12(X)	Same as private(X)	
88th	'Yellow'	Missing	12	DH(Ptd)	10	I	18	14	Same as private	
89th	-	-	12	-	-	-	18	14	-	-
	-	-	-	Ptd	10	T	-	-	-	'Blue edge in'
90th	-	-	-	DH	10	T	-	-	-	'Blue edge in'
93rd	-	-	13	-	-	-	18	12	-	'Jacket'
	-	One yellow stripe along one edge	13(15)	Coldsm	8	R	18	10	Same as private	'yellow edge of lace out'
94th	-	-	-	JH	9	R	-	-	-	'red edge out'(X)
95th	-	-	-	-	-	-	'44 Buttons'		-	'3 yards wte. Braid for feathering' 'Rifle Jacket'
(Rifle Brigade)	-	-	-	-	-	-	'44 Buttons'		Same as private	'3 yards of white braid for feathering. Collar straps & cuff only'
96th	'White' ('Light Buff')	One black stripe near one edge and one red stripe and one yellow stripe set together near the other edge, the red on the outside.	12	DH	10	T	18	12	Same as private	'red edge in'
97th	'Blue'	One blue stripe in centre and one yellow stripe near each edge	12	DH	10	R	18	12(14)	Same as private	
99th	-	-	-	DH	10	T	-	-	-	'late 100th'
103rd	-	-	-	DH	10	I	-	-	Same as private	-

Explanatory Notes:

Later alterations are given in brackets. A 'x' in brackets indicates that the entry was later struck out.

(a.) Description in Pearce entries, if given.

(b.) Description of lace sample glued into book, some are now missing, other entries were originally without any sample.

(c.) Abbreviations for the loop shapes are:

DH - 'Double-headed' (square)

FP - 'Flowerpot'

JH - 'Jew's Harp'

Ptd - 'Pointed'

Coldsm - 'Coldstream'

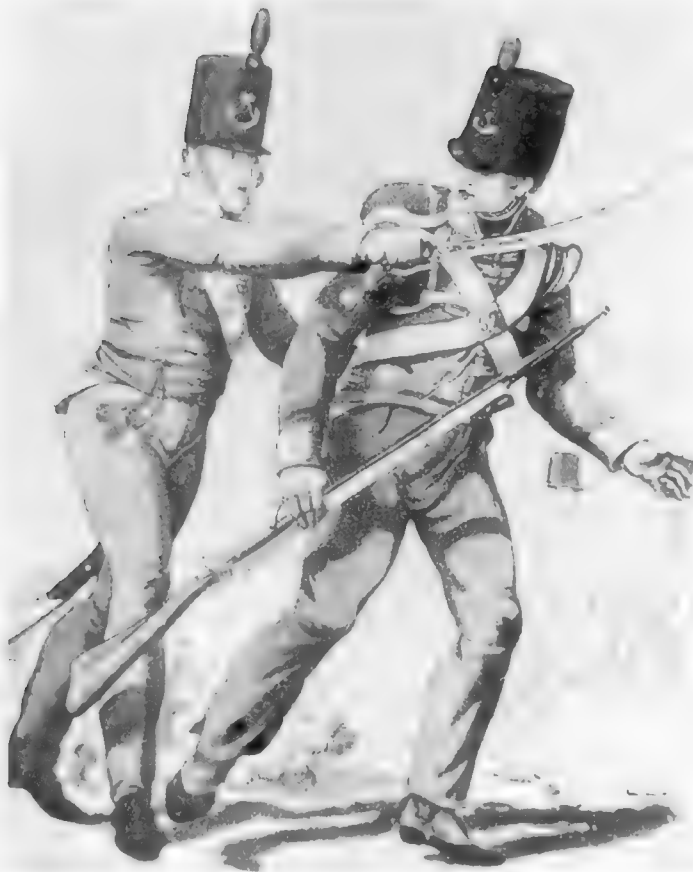
(d.) Number of loops on the breast.

(e.) Spacing of loops: R - 'Regular' (single, or even)
T - 'by 2' (in pairs)

(f.) The notations include many terse references to

sergeants' coats, usually entered simply as 'Same for Private', but occasionally there are other notations, all of which are reproduced with-out correction of spelling or punctuation. Thus braid has been left as 'Braid', etc. Some entries include no reference to sergeants' coats, and are left blank.

(g.) These notes usually refer to the placement of the regimental lace in forming the loop. They are reproduced without correction of spelling or punctuation.



Officer and private, 52nd (Oxfordshire) Light Infantry – after Charles Hamilton Smith, 1814. Light Infantry dress was distinguished not only by the retention of the stovepipe shako and the adoption of wings by all companies, but also by the use of small 'breast' buttons only. Pearse's notations for the 52nd Regiment call for 30 'small' buttons, and make special reference to 'jackets' being made as opposed to 'coats'. The shortness of the 'jacket', and its diagonal pocket flaps, are clearly visible. Pearse also required 15 yards of regimental looping for each jacket, three yards of which was the allowance for making up the wings. (Photo courtesy P. J. Haythornthwaite)

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true of the surviving coats and jackets which have been studied in this short series of articles, especially as to their provenance. It is to be hoped that some day more can be discovered – and should any 'MI' readers be able to shed further light on any aspect of the subject, the author would be only too glad to hear from them (and may be reached via the 'MI' editorial address, letters addressed to the author by name).

Acknowledgements

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Sources and Notes

(1) Canadian War Museum, Pearse books.

(2) PRO, WO 7/34, pp. 285–86.

(3) PRO, WO 7/34, pp. 280–81.

(4) CWM, Pearse books.

(5) CWM, Pearse books.

(6) CWM, Pearse books.

(7) PRO, WO 7/54

(8) The dating is based chiefly on the raising and disbanding dates of various corps in the books and on the dates of conversion of some corps into Light Infantry regiments (which necessitated a change of uniform). This establishes some of the limits on the dating, but of course it is not apparent from this exactly when the Pearse firm acquired contracts, or lost them, for particular regiments.

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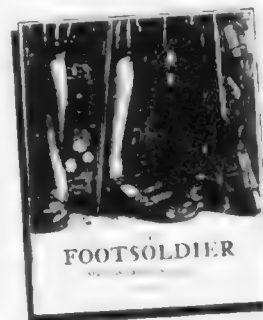
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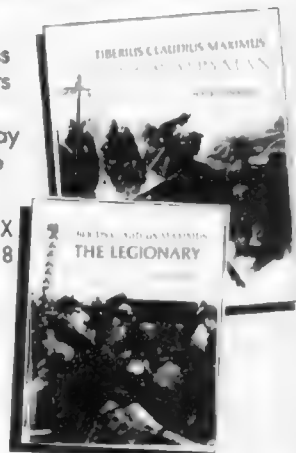
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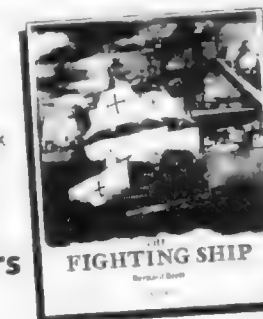
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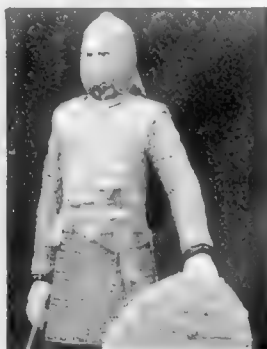


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John Chard and Gonville Bromhead

IAN KNIGHT

Painting by RICHARD SCOLLINS

Lieutenant J.R.M. Chard, RE, and Lieutenant G. Bromhead, 24th Regiment, are perhaps the two most famous subalterns in the history of the Victorian Colonial Wars. They are assured of an undying reputation due to historical chance: they happened to be the senior officers at the supposedly secure supply depot at Rorke's Drift in Natal, South Africa, on the day when Lord Chelmsford's invading column was wiped out at Isandlwana, in Zululand, and when the Zulu reserves pressed on to attack Rorke's Drift.

The subsequent battle has been immortalised on film and in dozens of books. After 12 hours of heavy fighting against overwhelming odds, the garrison drove off its attackers. No less than eleven VCs were won by the defenders of Rorke's Drift, including Chard and Bromhead.

Gonville Bromhead was born on 29 August 1845 at Versailles, France, the third son of Edmund de Gonville Bromhead, whose family home was at Newark, Nottinghamshire. He entered the 24th (2nd Warwickshires) as an ensign by purchase in April 1867; and was promoted to lieutenant by selection in October 1871. When the 2nd Battalion was sent to South Africa for the closing stages of the Ninth Cape Frontier War in 1878, Bromhead went with it as the subaltern for B Company, commanded by Capt. Alfred Godwin-Austen. Bromhead served throughout the remainder of the campaign, and took command of B Co. when Godwin-Austen was accidentally wounded by his own men during a drive through the bush of the Amatola Mountains in early May 1878.

Both battalions of the 24th were then moved up to Natal

for the coming campaign against the Zulus, where they would form the backbone of Lord Chelmsford's main striking arm, the Centre Column. This crossed the Mzi-nyathi (Buffalo) River into Zululand at Rorke's Drift on 11 January 1879, and was supplied by stores accumulated at the requisitioned mission station there. B Co. was left behind to garrison the post. Bromhead had apparently suffered from deafness for a number of years, a condition which was gradually getting worse; and it has been suggested that this influenced the selection of his company for this duty, although there is no evidence to the point. Rorke's Drift was a crucial base, under the overall command of Maj. H. Spalding, the column's Quarter-Master General.

John Rouse Merriott Chard was born at Boshill, near Plymouth, in December 1847. He entered the Royal Engineers in July 1868, and was sent out to South Africa with the 5th Company as part of Chelmsford's build-up for the Zulu War. He arrived at Durban early in 1879, and was sent with a small party to join the Centre Column. He reached Rorke's Drift on 19 January, and pitched camp on the Natal bank. The Column



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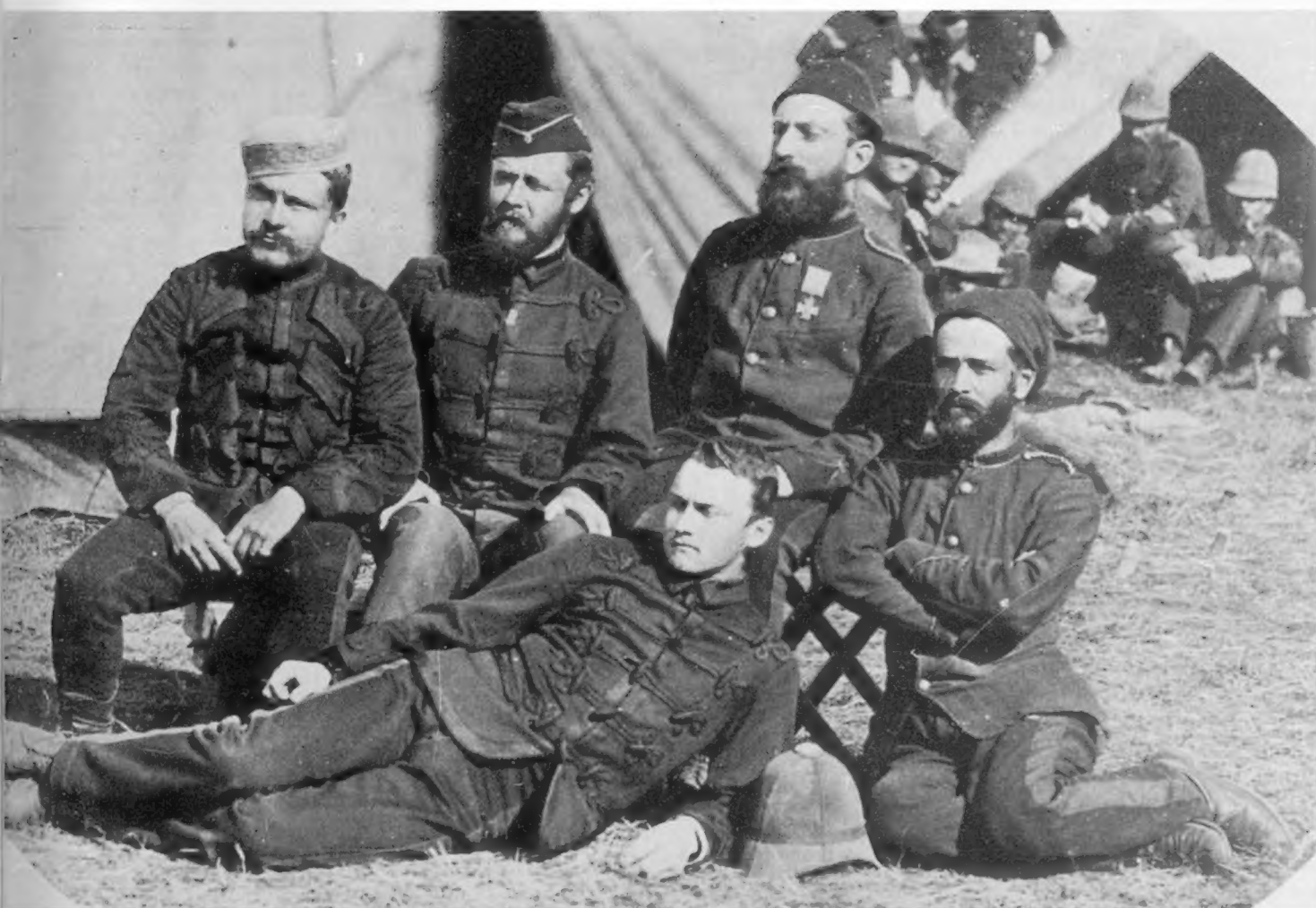
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A Royal Engineers group, photographed at the end of the Zulu campaign, 1879; Chard, right rear, is wearing his Victoria Cross on the Engineers' undress frock shown in our reconstruction. (S. Bourquin)

was then still camped on the Zulu bank opposite, and waggons were being ferried across by means of two pons (rafts), one of which was in poor repair. Chard's party set to work on the pont, and remained at the Drift when the Column advanced to Isandlwana.

On the evening of the 21st, Chard received an order that his men should join the Column at its new camp. Since his own position was not touched upon, Chard rode up to Isandlwana on the morning of the 22nd, and was told he was expected to remain at the Drift. He returned there and remained with only one of his men (his batman, Sapper Robson); the remaining four Engineers marched to Isandlwana, where they arrived just in time to be killed. Concerned by reports of Zulu movements across the river, Chard discussed the situation with Maj. Spalding, who decided to ride back down the lines of communication to Helpmakaar, to hurry along a company of the

24th which should have arrived to reinforce the post. Spalding checked his Army List, found Chard was senior to Bromhead, and left him in command with the comment, 'Of course, nothing will happen, and I shall be back again early this evening'. A couple of hours later the first fugitives arrived with news of the massacre at Isandlwana.

Chard left two accounts of the ensuing battle: his official report, and a longer, more detailed one written at Queen Victoria's request. Bromhead does not seem to have left any account, official or otherwise. After a hurried consultation, Chard and Bromhead decided against flight, and organised the defence of the post, urged on by one of the Commisariat officers, James Dalton. The accumulation of stores – sacks of mealie corn and heavy wooden crates of army biscuits – were dragged out and formed into barricades. When the desertion of a company of the Natal Native Contingent consider-

ably reduced the garrison's strength, Chard ordered a new line of biscuit boxes to bisect the yard as a final redoubt.

Because the battle was fought in a confined space, neither officer had the opportunity to display tactical flair, but both took an active part in the defence, encouraging and directing their men. Chard mentions Bromhead leading bayonet charges to keep the Zulus away from the front of the beleaguered hospital; and other survivors' accounts picture them both firing over barricades, or joining the fierce flurries of hand-to-hand fighting when the Zulu charges struck home. Despite their active rôle, however, neither Chard nor Bromhead was wounded.

Later careers

After the battle, B Co. were given the place of honour in the new fort built at Rorke's Drift to house the remnants of Chelmsford's column. Bromhead served with his

men throughout the remainder of the war; but the 2/24th was employed on garrison duty during the second invasion, and saw no further action. Like many others in the cramped and insanitary conditions following the battle, Chard fell sick, and was invalided for a while to Ladysmith. He later returned to 5 Co. RE, however, and served with it on the march to Ulundi.

As a result of the battle, both men were promoted to brevet-major, and received their VCs from Sir Garnet Wolseley in the field, Chard on 16 July and Bromhead on 22 August. On their subsequent return to England, both were fêted as heroes by the public. Bromhead went on to serve with his battalion in India and during the Burma War of 1885-9. He

died of enteric fever at Camp Dabhaura, Allahabad, India, on 9 February 1891. Chard served overseas in a number of postings, but did not see active service again. He developed cancer of the tongue, and retired from the service with the rank of colonel in August 1897. He died on 1 November 1897, and was buried in the churchyard of Hatch Beauchamp near Taunton, Somerset.

Chard's company commander, Capt. Walter Parke Jones, has left a revealing insight into his personality:

'Chard got his orders to leave the 5th Company for good and departed yesterday. He is a most amiable fellow and a loss to the mess, but as a company officer he is hopelessly slow and slack . . . Chard makes me angry, with such a start as he got, he stuck to the company doing nothing . . . he could have gone home at soon after Rorke's Drift, at the height of his popularity, and done splendidly at home. I advised him, but he placidly smokes his pipe and does nothing.'

Bromhead's character is more elusive; few who met him commented upon it. He seems to have been a quiet man, and one wonders if his deafness had made him withdrawn and introverted.

UNIFORMS AT RORKE'S DRIFT

Despite the fact that both men served throughout the campaign, there are few photographs of them in the field: one group portrait of Chard with fellow Engineer officers, and two photographs of B Co., including Bromhead. Any reconstruction of their uniforms on the day of the battle must, therefore, have a speculative element, although it is possible to present a highly probable picture of their appearance.

Detail from a group photograph of men of B Co., 2nd Bn., 24th Regt. probably taken at Pinetown, Natal, at the end of the war. Another figure has often been identified as Gonville Bromhead; in fact he is the figure at the left of the front row, the only man without a rifle. His jacket appears completely plain. (S. Bourquin)

Capt. Jones, again, has left a good account of the uniform of an RE officer on campaign:

'My attire consists of riding boots and breeches, a private soldier's red serge, my white helmet dyed with mimosa bark to a brown colour and denuded of its brass ornaments, a revolver, and no sword. Add to this my beard, and you have a very different sort of article from the soldier for home use.'

In the famous group photo Chard is wearing not a private's serge, but the RE officer's undress frock. This was scarlet with dark blue collar and cuffs, the collar being edged all round with gold braid, and the cuffs edged with gold ending in a crow's-foot knot. There was a thin loop of twisted gold cord on each shoulder. The frock was fastened with five buttons. Since Chard had ridden to Isandlwana on the morning of the battle, it is reasonable to suppose that he, like Jones, wore light-brown cord riding breeches and some sort of boots.

In both photographs Bromhead is wearing a scarlet jacket and blue trousers. Infantry officers often wore their undress frock, which was scarlet with a plain collar of facing colour, gold embroidery on the cuffs, and white piping around the edges and shoulder straps. However, the piping, which usually shows up clearly in photographs, is not obvious in the photos of Bromhead, whose jacket appears plain. There is an intriguing poss-

ible solution to this curiosity. The Royal Regiment of Wales Museum at Brecon has the jacket worn by Bromhead's predecessor as commander of B Co., Capt. Godwin-Austen – complete with rip in the back where he was wounded. It is an Other Rank's five-button serge denuded of all facings and braid except for the green patch on either side of the collar. Was Bromhead wearing a similar unofficial jacket? It would be entirely consistent with the photographic evidence.

On the question of personal armament it is possible to be more conclusive. It is unlikely that either man wore a sword, which would have been impractical in such a close-quarter fight, and which are not mentioned in any first-hand accounts. Both men began the battle using revolvers, however, and ended it with Martini-Henry rifles. Chard was standing next to Dalton when the latter was wounded, and handed Chard his rifle; since at least one man subsequently gave Chard his cartridges, it can be assumed that he used it throughout the fight. Bromhead handed his revolver to Pte. Hitch when Hitch was struck in the shoulder by a Zulu bullet, and was unable to use his rifle. Later, Cpl. Lyons noted: 'Lieutenant Bromhead was on the right face, firing over the mealies with a Martini-Henry'.

* * *

It is perhaps true that the careers of both Chard and

Richard Scollins' reconstruction opposite shows Chard (left) wearing a Royal Engineer officer's undress frock, riding breeches and boots. Bromhead (right) is wearing an OR's serge, stripped of all facings and ornament except for the collar patches, and without rank insignia of any sort. Trousers are standard issue, blue with a narrow red welt (observed here) on the outer seam. Both men wear foreign service helmets stained with tea or other improvised dyes, and both carry Martini-Henry rifles. Although both were known to have carried revolvers, there is no direct evidence as to the manner of carrying them; we have shown the two most popular means, either attached to a waist belt, or suspended on a shoulder strap. The makes of revolver are not known. We have given Bromhead an OR's haversack in which to carry his ammunition: Chard is known to have carried his cartridges in his pocket. Chard's water-bottle – presumably a private purchase, since it is not the official 'Oliver' pattern – still exists and is in the Royal Engineers' Museum. Bromhead is sitting on a biscuit box of the type used in the barricades. Both men appear heavily bearded in their photographs.

Bromhead might have remained undistinguished had it not been for the events leading up to Rorke's Drift, but there can be no doubt that they acquitted themselves well on the day; Lord Chelmsford's comments in the citation for Bromhead's VC are an appropriate tribute:

'The Lieutenant General reports that had it not been for the firm example and excellent behaviour of Lieutenants Chard, Royal Engineers, and Bromhead, 24th Regiment, the defence of Rorke's Drift would not have been conducted with the intelligence and tenacity which so eminently characterised it. The Lieutenant General adds, that the success must in great measure be attributable to the two young officers who exercised the chief command on the occasion in question'.

Sources

Chard's letter to Queen Victoria can be found, together with other eyewitness accounts of Rorke's Drift and biographical details of Bromhead, in Norman Holme's *The Silver Wreath* (1979). Frank Emery's *The Red Soldier* (1978) also contains eyewitness descriptions of the battle. Canon Lummis' *Padre George Smith of Rorke's Drift* (1979) includes brief notes on all eleven VC winners.



Rorke's Drift, 22 January 1879

Lt. J.R.M. Chard, RE

Lt. G. Bromhead, 24th Regt.



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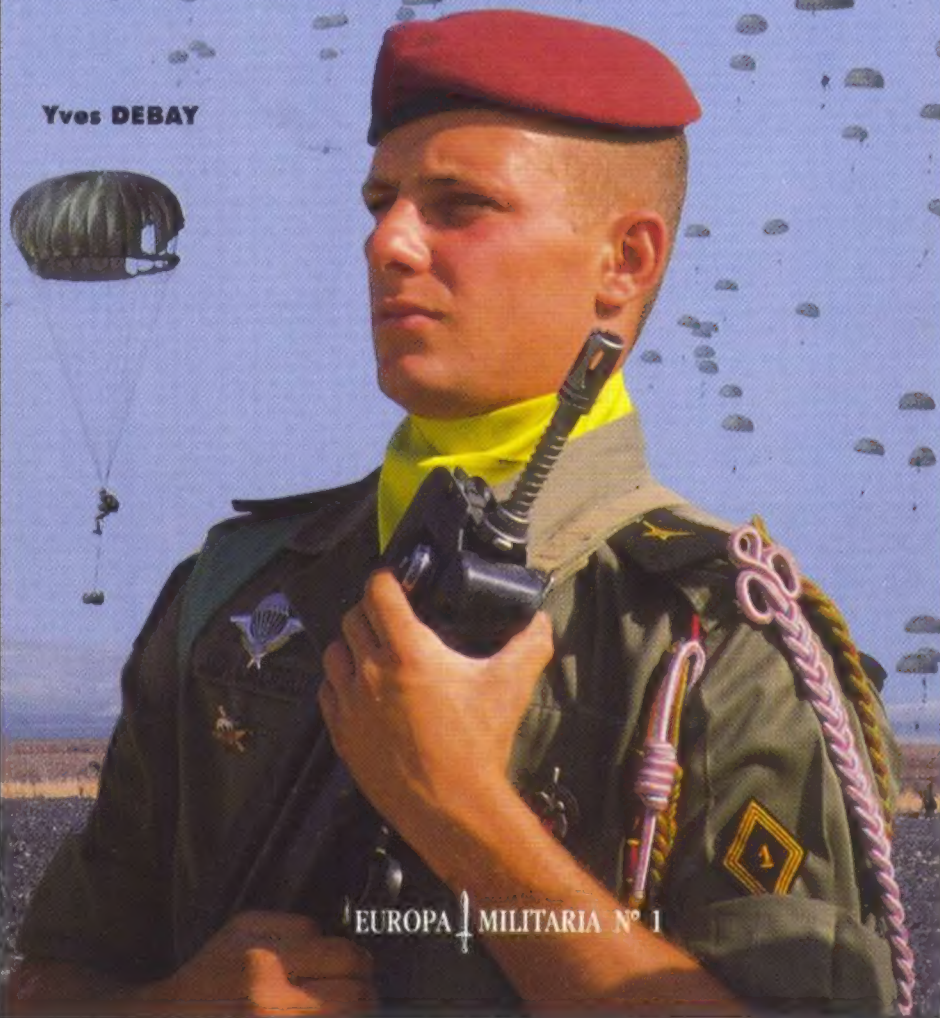
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